

# ROTUNDA

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

volume 36: number 3  
2004 spring

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**A**DAM ("The Face That Launched A Thousand Fakes?") holds a postdoctoral fellowship in the ROM's Department of Anthropology. His research on Zapotec urns, both genuine and fake, takes him to museums and archives throughout the Americas and Europe. Currently he is curating an exhibit on Zapotec civilization for the ROM's new Renaissance ROM galleries.



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*Department of Western Art and Culture*

**P**ETER ("RARE ROCOCO") is a curator specializing in European decorative arts at the ROM. He joined the European Department in 1972 and over the years has worked on its collections of ceramics, glass, furniture, and silver. Since 1986, Peter's collecting and research have focused increasingly on silver. Founder of the "ROM Answers" column, first appearing in *City & Country Home* (1982-1992), he now devotes significant time to organizing two programs unique in the world of museums—the annual Decorative Arts Symposium and the annual Studies in Silver lecture.



### Dr. Krzysztof Grzymski

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**K**RZYSZTOF ("Travellers from an Antique Land") is senior curator of Egyptology at the ROM and has excavated in Nubia since the early 1980s. He was the key scholar in developing the ROM's Nubian Gallery.

## THE ROM

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Below: Lion of Amenhotep. III Reinscribed for Tutankhamun, From Gebel Barkal, originally from Soleb, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, Reign of Amenhotep III (ca. 1390-1352 B.C.), Red granite, 111 x 216 x 95.4 cm, EA 2, acquired in 1835, Gift of Lord Prudhoe, ©Trustees of The British Museum, courtesy AFA





## ROM MESSAGE

**T**HE NEW DIRECTOR of the Chinese National Museum in Beijing visited Toronto recently on an intelligence mission. The Chinese museum, dating from the 1950s and located on the east side of Tian'anmen Square, will be renovated and substantially expanded in time for the 2008 Summer Olympics in the capital. Completion is slated for 2007.

Pan Zhenzhou and his colleagues were visiting the ROM to investigate how we are executing a similarly ambitious project. Mr. Pan was impressed by the scope, ambition, and speed of Renaissance ROM, and we will soon be visiting him in Beijing to share our experiences.

Renaissance ROM is among the largest museum projects in the world today, and is unfolding at perhaps the fastest pace. From a standing start in late 2000, the ROM has moved from a vision for its transformation to construction of the Michael A. Lee-Chin Crystal by Daniel Libeskind, now underway on Bloor Street, the creation of some 20 new galleries by Haley Sharpe Design, the development of a new learning centre for students, and detailed plans for additional restaurants, bars, shops, and visitor amenities.

Funding for the \$200-million project began with Ontario SuperBuild's investment of \$30 million in March 2002, matched by the federal government that May. In addition, the ROM Foundation has raised more than \$60 million in just two years toward the cost of the project. That still leaves a substantial amount of money to be raised from public and private sources, but the quality of the project suggests that willing donors will be found.

That quality rests on substantial foundations. First are the collections

of the Museum itself, substantial portions of which have been stranded for years in the vaults. Costume and textiles, Canadian First Peoples, Canadian historical art, early life on Earth, Japan, Africa, the Americas and Asia Pacific, much of South and West Asia



and 20th Century design—most Canadians have never had an opportunity to see these collections. All of them will be exposed in new galleries.

Several existing collections will also be recast and expanded in wonderful new galleries, in particular the ROM's extraordinary dinosaur specimens, China, Korea, Rome, Nubia, Etruria, Byzantium, and the ROM's superb minerals and gems.

In all, Renaissance ROM will create 155,000 square feet in new permanent galleries. The ROM's permanent gallery space will grow to 214,000 square feet, covering both mandates of nature and culture, an enormous elevation of the Museum's offerings to

the public. Ontario and Canada will have one of the world's few truly universal museums, poised to deepen its collections and research in the coming century as it did in the past.

Architecture plays an essential supporting role in all this. It always did. The ROM's first wing, which opened in March 1914, and its second, which opened in 1931, were ambitious architectural statements for their times, if not daring ones. Museums, like most great cultural institutions, have always invested in architecture as part of their expression in the world.

Renaissance ROM will retrieve much of the original grace of these heritage wings, restoring vistas and opening windows and halls.

Daniel Libeskind's Crystal addition on Bloor Street will be a soaring act of the imagination, a shimmering foil to the heritage wings. It will provide an ample new main entrance for many more visitors, six new permanent galleries, an international exhibition hall, new shops, restaurants, and unique public spaces. The Michael A. Lee-Chin Crystal will stand among the defining

public works of Toronto in the new century, optimistic, elegant, bold, and full of light—like the city itself.

Taken together, these changes will attract millions of new visitors to the ROM, enrich their experiences, and generate the operating funds required to reinvest in the Museum's public programs, collections, and research. That's what Renaissance ROM is all about and why so many people involved in major museum projects elsewhere in the world are visiting Toronto to see what's going on.

*William Thorsell is director and Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Ontario Museum.*



# E X P L O R A



MIMA KAPCHES, ROM

## Pom-Pom Girls

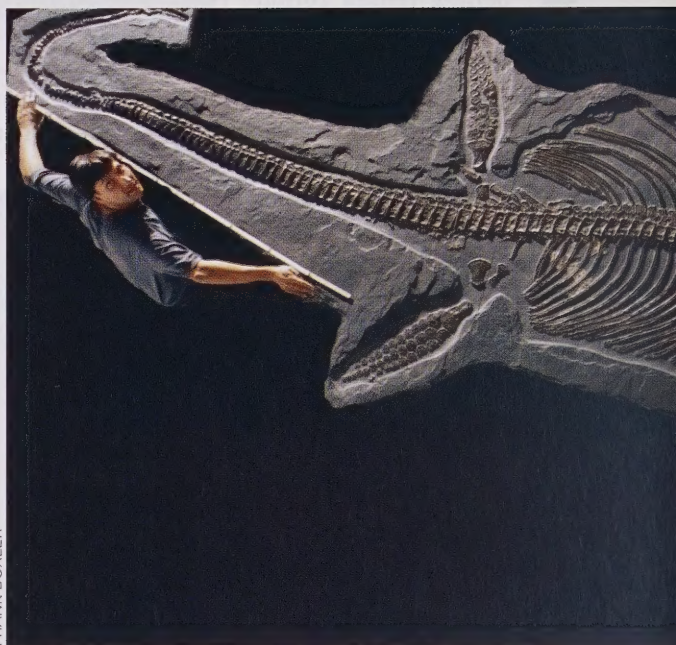
*Ancient images created by  
the Fremont peoples*

**I**N MAY OF 2003 I visited Nine Mile Canyon, Utah, possibly the largest outdoor rock art gallery in the Americas. The canyon is located east of Price, Utah, about a three-hour drive southeast of Salt Lake City. In 39°C heat I carefully climbed up rubble-filled slopes to examine in closer detail the images pecked in the rock by Fremont peoples more than 500 years ago.

This image is fondly referred to as the "Pom-Pom Girls" site because the war shields being held by the human-like figures look like large pom-poms being waved during some ancient sporting event. In reality, these are male Fremont warriors, whose large shields gave them great symbolic strength. The pecking of the image into the red sandstone required the men to climb ladders placed on narrow ledges in the canyon. This in itself was a great feat of bravery.

This image was first recorded by Henry Montgomery, a Canadian who was employed by the University of Utah in 1892. When first recorded, the image had not been defaced by the initials S. F. nor by the circular scars caused by rifle shots that are now visible on its surface. Today the Bureau of Land Management protects the canyon and an active group of volunteers patrols it to prevent further senseless destruction of this important archaeological resource.

—Mima Kapches



FRANK BOXLER

## A Monster M

*ROM's reputation figures in*

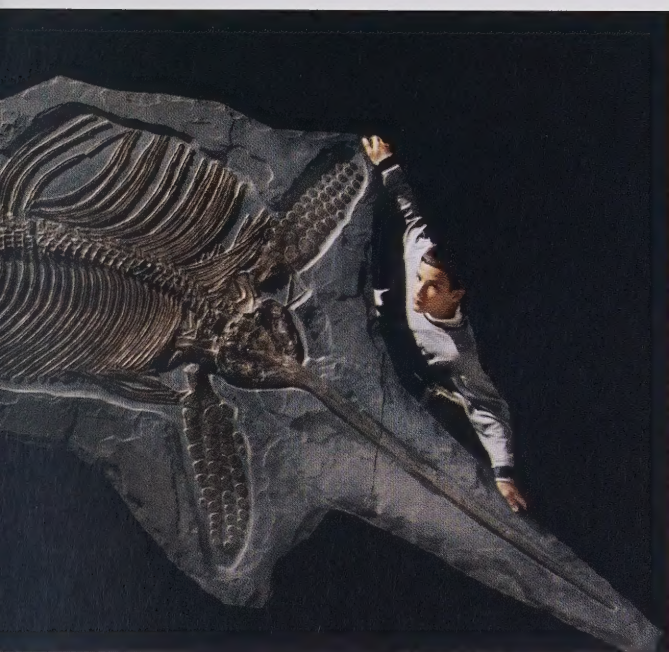
**T**HE CENTREPIECE of the marine Jurassic exhibit planned for Ruling Reptiles in the second floor Crystal of RenROM is a newly acquired and spectacular seven-metre-long ichthyosaur named *Eurhinosaurus longirostris*. This is one of the largest, rarest, and most complete ichthyosaurs ever allowed to leave Germany. The skeleton is 90 per cent complete, lacking only the tip of the left front paddle, a few small bones at the rear, and the front part of the rostrum (snout), which has been replaced by a rostrum from another eurhinosaur.

Eurhinosaurs must have been one of the major predators in the seas of 180 million

years ago. This specimen's remains were found in the Posidonienschiefer of southern Germany, which is famous for its fossil ichthyosaurs, large crinoid (sea-lily) colonies, and a variety of fishes and molluscs. One of the sea-lily colonies was recently acquired by the ROM for the same display.

The acquisition of *Eurhinosaurus* is a tribute to the vision and generosity of Louise Hawley Stone on the one hand, and to the ROM's international reputation on the other. Mrs. Stone wanted a large part of the income from her bequest to be used to acquire "landmark" specimens or artifacts that occasionally came on the market, for dis-





## Marine Reptile

...ing this impressive specimen

play in the ROM. Access to significant acquisition funds now makes it worthwhile for ROM palaeobiologists to attend the Tucson Rock, Mineral, and Fossil Show in early February each year, seeking important fossil acquisitions. During the 2002 Tucson Show, I met a German dealer, Raimund Albersdörfer, who had this wonderful ichthyosaur, but could not sell it without an export permit. By Baden-Wuerttemberg law, all fossils belong to the state, and one needs a permit from the Stuttgart Museum to export them. The curator of ichthyosaurs at the Stuttgart Museum, Dr. Rupert Wild, was very reluctant to recommend an export

permit for such "a superb and excellently preserved, complete specimen, which is extremely rare for this genus" (Rupert Wild, letter of June 12, 2002). However, Dr. Wild is a research colleague of ROM scientist Dr. Chris McGowan and knows of the ROM's excellent reputation. Consequently, he agreed to recommend an export permit for the *Eurhinosaurus* to come to the ROM, to our delight and that of Raimund Albersdörfer.

The complete, restored *Eurhinosaurus longirostris* (*longirostris* refers to the long snout) is pictured here, along with Raimund Albersdörfer and his son.

—Desmond Collins



BRIAN BOYLE, ROM

Image of romarchite (large crystal) under the ROM's scanning electron microscope. Smaller crystals are of new unidentified tin compound.

## Lost bowls: a natural laboratory

Discovering rare minerals

**I**N THE 1960S, archaeologists from the ROM and Minnesota recovered a unique find of early 19th-century pewter bowls from an underwater site at Boundary Falls, along the Winnipeg River in northern Ontario. The bowls were probably lost by a voyageur plying this major fur trade route, the Falls having a reputation of danger. A few of the bowls were tightly nested and cemented together by corrosion products. (Pewter is primarily tin alloyed with other metals, such as lead, antimony, and copper in this particular case.) Recent research by Earth Sciences suggests that confined spaces between the nested bowls constituted a unique environment: very cold waters, reduced oxygen levels resulting from dissolution and oxidation of tin, and a long time frame of a century and a half, leading to the crystallization of rare tin compounds. Two of these had been described by ROM staff in 1971 as the new minerals romarchite and hydroromarchite. (The mineral name romarchite is a contraction of ROM and archaeology, and may well be the only species name, mineral or otherwise, that directly honours a museum.) We have discovered yet another two most intriguing tin corrosion products. These appear to be unlike any natural or synthetic tin compounds known to science.

—Bob Ramik





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# SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN

*Recent 20th-century acquisitions of silver by Canadian silversmiths Carl Poul Petersen and Douglas Boyd were considered too avant-garde for popular Canadian tastes when they were made.*



BRIAN BOYLE, ROM

**R**ECENTLY, THE ROM acquired silverwork by 20th-century Canadian silversmiths Carl Poul Petersen and Douglas Boyd —reinforcing a new direction in the collecting of Canadian decorative arts at the ROM assumed just a few years ago. Twelve pieces by Petersen come from Bernard and Sylvia Ostry as part of a much larger donation by the Ostrys of English Arts and Crafts and European Art Deco objects. The silver by Boyd con-

sists of a three-piece coffee service, which was a ROM purchase.

Over the years, the ROM's collecting focus was on historical decorative arts of the colonial, pre-industrial period, that is, before approximately 1860.

## ROSS FOX

The original model, in effect, was the Winterthur Museum in Winterthur, Delaware. The ROM did collect later

Tea and Coffee Service by Carl Poul Petersen.

19th-century material, but not in as comprehensive a manner, because the major collections were glass and ceramics. Some prize-winning ceramics were acquired from arts and crafts exhibitions held at the ROM during the 1960s and 70s. Otherwise, the great richness in Canadian decorative arts for which the ROM is reputed reflects the early colonial experience in Canada.

A break with this original mission





Cake Plate and Pair of Bonbonnières by Carl Poul Petersen.

was initiated in the 1990s by curators Howard Collinson and Virginia Wright who coordinated the acquisition of articles of late 20th-century Canadian decorative arts and design. It is a direction that now continues to be pursued.

The silverwork by Carl Poul Petersen (1895–1977) donated by the Os-trys consists of a cake plate with server, five bonbonnières, and a five-piece tea and coffee service. Petersen has attracted a great deal of attention lately in an exhibition organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in 2002, which is still touring. He is arguably the best-known Canadian representative of the 20th-century revival of handcrafted silver. As a native of Denmark, Petersen's claim to having studied under Georg Jensen (1866–1935), the internationally renowned exponent of early Danish modernist design, is convincing. Echoes of Jensen permeate Petersen's work throughout his career.

Petersen immigrated to Montreal in 1929, at the beginning of the Great Depression. For more than a decade he worked off and on for Henry Birks

& Sons Ltd. In 1944 he established his own workshop at 1221 Mackay Street. Two years later his operation was registered as C. P. Petersen & Sons Ltd. It would remain at the Mackay Street address until dissolved in 1979. From the outset of this workshop, Petersen was positioned to avail himself fully of a propitious change in world events.

The economic boom after World War II found expression in the rise of the Scandinavian Modern style as a dominant international style. This phenomenon gripped both Canada and the United States, and did not subside until the early 1960s. Petersen benefited immensely from this new vogue. By 1948, he employed 20 workers. Among contemporary artisanal silversmiths in Quebec, he was the only one who specialized in household silver, although he produced some religious and honorific silver as well. His clientele grew beyond Montreal to elsewhere in Canada and, above all, to the USA.

Canadian receptivity to Scandinavian design in metalwork was honed by events such as the exhibition *Design in Scandinavia*, which toured the USA and Canada for three and a half years beginning in 1954. This was followed by the

founding in Toronto of the first retail outlet of Georg Jensen (Canada) Ltd., in 1956. It was located at 95A Bloor Street West, just a few blocks from the Royal Ontario Museum. The building itself was a striking local statement of Danish Modern. Birks and the Eaton's department store chain had marketed Jensen silver in previous years. Other Jensen stores followed in other major cities in Canada, which not only gave the Danish version of Scandinavian design extended exposure and acceptance, but provided Petersen with competition. Petersen countered this intrusion in his advertisements by highlighting himself as "The Danish Silversmith." By capitalizing on his "Danish" nationality, there was the implied assertion that he could produce silverwork as fine as any imported from Denmark.

Danish-style silverwork, nevertheless, had a narrow market in Canada. It appealed largely to modernist aficionados; it was regarded by average Canadians as too avant-garde. Petersen had a loyal clientele in Montreal's Jewish community. Other key constituencies were recent immigrants from Europe, who were familiar with modern design, and architects and de-





BRIAN BOYLE, ROM

signers themselves, who naturally were more informed in matters of style. In contrast, average Canadians continued to prefer tired English revival styles as exemplified by Birks.

Ironically, Petersen's designs were themselves stylistically out of step with cutting-edge contemporary international design and the Scandinavian Modern style itself, which was a more recent outgrowth of 1920s international modernism, especially the German Bauhaus. Petersen emulated the early Georg Jensen of the period before 1920. The stylistic character of this work belongs to a late phase of the so-called *Skønvirke* period (1880–1920) in Denmark, which corresponds to the Arts & Crafts movement in Britain, the *Jugendstil* in Germany and Austria, and Art Nouveau in France. It was closest to the Arts & Crafts movement. *Skønvirke* literally translates as "beautiful work," signifying a high standard of quality in design and craftsmanship. It was a reaction to cheap, poorly fabricated industrial products. Handwork and beauty were extolled in simple shapes, where clarity and fluidity prevail, and in discrete, naturalistic

Coffee Service by Douglas Boyd.

ornamentation. There is a subtle but pervasive debt to japanism (i.e., Japanese aesthetics). In Scandinavian Modern, functionalism and form are at the fore, where there is a coupling of organic abstraction and austerity.

So Petersen's silver held to a middle ground between old and new. To be more daring in silver design would have been too risky in the Canadian context. Perhaps it was the heirloom associations of household silver that underlay this more cautious attitude towards silver design. It was considered a perennial luxury to be passed down through the generations of a family. Canadian values were still extremely conservative and traditionalist in this period. This may also help to explain the frequent, but not entirely easy, juxtaposition of early modernist silver by Petersen à la Jensen, in settings with contemporary Scandinavian Modern furnishings.

Petersen had a standard repertoire of designs, which he repeated again and again, though he also did some custom work. The Ostry gift is typical of the former category. The cake plate elicits

gentle reverberations of a lyrical japanism. Its gracefully undulating rim is edged with a tendril, which sprouts a "corn" (also called a "sweet pea") motif at each corner. The same motif adorns the handle-end of the cake server. The corn motif is one of the more recurrent of Petersen's vegetal motifs. These motifs are more generic than specific. The forms of the tea and coffee service are curvaceous. The creamer and sugar bowl have delicate, looped, ribbon-like handles and scrolled leaf-form feet. The tea and coffee pots have looped handles of ebony.

The bonbonnière, or comport, for serving candy or nuts, as the name implies, was one of the more popular Petersen forms. The five Ostry bonbonnières are in three different patterns, but share the same basic form: a leaf-like (lotus?) dish with half-arched handle and supported on a stem of four upright lanceolate leaves. In all cases a blossom-like form emerges from the stem-like handle. In one pair it appears to be a lily of the valley, in another pair it is the "corn" motif already seen. In the fifth bonbonnière, it is a berry-like cluster (resembling a grape hyacinth?). Evidently Jacques Phaneuf (1895–1977), who apprenticed under Petersen, was the workman in the Petersen's workshop who specialized in making this kind of bonbonnière (see Robert Derome et al., *Les orfèvres montréalais des origines à nos jours*, Galerie de l'UQAM, 1996).

Residual hammer marks impart a softening effect to the surfaces of Petersen's silverwork and convey the impression that the pieces were handwrought. This is only partially true. Petersen also used mechanical means in combination with handicraft. In the cases of the Ostry cake plate, teapot, coffee pot, and bonbonnières, the feet or pedestals were all made by spinning. Petersen encouraged the fiction that his silverwork was completely handmade. By so doing he gave his work enhanced cachet.

Like Petersen, Douglas Boyd (1901–1972) exemplifies modern Scandinavian influences in Canadian silver-



work. Toronto's acceptance of Scandinavian design was slowly nurtured by local factors such as an exhibition of Danish applied art at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1929, which included some 100 pieces of silver by Georg Jensen. The next year, Swedish-born Håkan Rudolph (Rudy) Renzius settled in Toronto. Trained in Copenhagen under Ib Just Andersen, silversmith, pewterer, and occasional designer for Georg Jensen, Renzius is credited with training a whole generation of silversmiths, though he worked primarily in pewter himself.

The Toronto-based Ontario branch of the Canadian Guild of Crafts also encouraged openness to Scandinavian aesthetics and modern design in general. This orientation had a persuasive advocate in Toronto socialite Nora E. Vaughan, who was a mover in this organization, as well as being an influential tastemaker. She was the wife of O. D. Vaughan, a top executive in Eaton's. The Vaughans were avid collectors of Jensen silver and Nora E. Vaughan bequeathed

a splendid collection of Jensen silver to the ROM in 1993. Most of these Jensen pieces date from the 1920s and 1930s. (Other Jensen pieces were subsequently donated to the ROM by Herman Levy, Bernard and Sylvia Ostry, and others.) The aggregate of these factors and others produced a climate during the 1950s and 1960s in what is now the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) that allowed some remarkable silversmiths to thrive. All of them were indebted in some degree to Jensen and Scandinavian Modern—Douglas Boyd, Harold Stacey, Andrew Fussell, Hero Kielman, etc. Boyd, Stacey, and Fussell all studied under Renzius.

Unlike Petersen with his team of workmen, these silversmiths adhered more closely to the traditional model of the independent designer-craftsperson using traditional handwrought techniques. They also relied heavily on commission work. This is the case for Boyd who was based in Richmond Hill, north of Toronto. Most of Boyd's work was of an ecclesiastical nature and

therefore remains largely inaccessible to the public. The ROM's recent purchase of a three-piece coffee service by Boyd is therefore most fortuitous. The household form for which Boyd is probably best known is the cocktail shaker. The ROM acquired an example in 1962. The coffee service dates from 1953. Surfaces are unadorned in Boyd's characteristic manner, but this is compensated for by the strength of the individual forms themselves. Surfaces are enlivened visually by the gentle modulations created by perceptible hammer marks.

Petersen and Boyd are exemplars of a climate in the immediate post-war decades where there was a renewed appreciation for handwrought silver in Canada. The fashion for artisanal silver would begin to decline in the 1960s and today the buying of household silver belongs to bygone days.

*Dr. Ross Fox specializes in Canadian decorative arts in the ROM's Department of Western Art and Culture.*

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# IRIDESCENT INVADERS

*Discovered recently in Ontario, the harmful Asian longhorned beetle has a life cycle that enables it to survive harsh Canadian winters.*

**B**ENEATH ITS iridescent exterior lies the potential for one of the most significant threats ever faced by our hardwood forests. As its name indicates, the Asian longhorned beetle, *Anoplophora glabripennis*, is not native to Canada. This beetle was accidentally introduced to North America from China or Korea, probably in solid wood shipping crates. Although it is not harmful to humans, animals, houses, or coniferous (evergreen) trees, the beetle poses a serious threat to deciduous trees such as sugar maples, birches, elms, poplars, and willows. Canada's \$100-million-a-year maple syrup industry and \$11-billion-a-year hardwood-products industry are in jeopardy if this beetle goes unchecked.

The cause for concern is the effect that this beetle's feeding has on living trees, combined with the lack of any natural predators in Canada. Human intervention is therefore required to control and prevent the spread of this introduced species.

Adult Asian longhorned beetles are typically 2.5 to 3.5 cm (1 to 1.4 inches) in length, with white spots and very long antennae, and should not be confused with the cottonwood borer, which is black with numerous white cross-stripes (see photo top right). In areas where Asian longhorned beetles have invaded, adult beetles can be expected to be seen in July and August but are capable of surviving until the first frost of the season.

The beetle goes through four life stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. All stages but the adult can survive our



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harsh Canadian winters through a process called overwintering. Adult females live an average of 40 days during which they can lay dozens of eggs that will hatch in one to two weeks. For each egg she lays, an adult female will chew a

Top left: Asian longhorned beetle. Top right: Cottonwood borer. Bottom: Asian longhorned beetle on log with exit hole.

into a protective layer. Upon hatching, the young larvae will burrow into the wood of the tree, creating tunnels as they feed. During this process the larvae cause the most severe damage to living trees, possibly killing mature trees within one or two growing seasons. The larvae will eventually enter a pupal stage, metamorphosing into

BRAD HUBLEY

hole 1 cm deep into the bark of a tree (see photo). She covers the hole's entrance with a secretion that hardens



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## ETERNAL E·G·Y·P·T

MASTERWORKS OF ANCIENT ART  
FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM

This exhibition is organized by the American Federation of Arts and The British Museum.

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This exhibition and its North American tour are made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund.  
Ford of Canada, Ltd. has also provided support for the exhibition's presentation in Toronto.

Additional support has been provided by the Benefactors Circle of the AFA.

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This event has been financially assisted by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund a program of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture, administered by the Ontario Cultural Fund Corporation. The ROM is an agency of the Government of Ontario. Detail, Mummy Mask of Satihehuty, EA 29770, acquired in 1880, purchased at Morten & Sons from the sale of the collection of Samuel Hull, © Trustees of The British Museum, courtesy AFA.



adults that emerge from the tree in summer. Adult females will often burrow and lay their eggs into the same tree from which they emerged; however, like most beetles that have wings, they are quite capable of searching for more suitable hosts. Adult beetles can cause further damage by feeding on the leaves and young shoots of trees. The holes that they create in a tree's bark may also provide a passage for disease to enter.

On September 4, 2003, an Asian longhorned beetle was discovered in Woodbridge, Ontario. The government agency responsible for monitoring and controlling the spread of this beetle is the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The CFIA has implemented an aggressive campaign to control the beetle's spread with the ultimate goal of complete eradication of this invasive insect. Control measures include a detailed survey of hardwood trees over an expansive area where this beetle was initially discovered. Any trees showing signs of infestation are being cut down, the wood chipped and composted. In an attempt to prevent more beetles from entering Canada, the CFIA has imposed regulatory directives that require heat or chemical treatment of all solid wood cargo crating originating in China (including Hong Kong). The Asian longhorned beetle has also been found in New York State, and as a consequence thousands of trees have been cut down and destroyed—Chicago and Seattle have also had to contend with the introduction of the beetle and are taking similar actions to prevent its spread. Diverse planting of a variety of hardwood trees is one method to control the spread because the beetle prefers maple trees.

Individuals who suspect infestation of hardwood trees in their neighbourhood may contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at 1-800-442-2342 between the hours of 8 am and 8 pm local time or through the website at [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca).

*Brad Hubley is the entomology collection manager in the ROM's Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Biology.*



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COMING IN THE FALL 2004 ISSUE

## Coral Reef Fishes



*ROM ichthyologist Rick Winterbottom's new theory on the incredible biodiversity of the "Indonesia Triangle"*



ROTUNDA



*A Royal (?) Woman*,  
provenance unknown,  
Old Kingdom, 4th Dynasty  
(ca 2613–2566 BC),  
calcite (Egyptian alabaster) with  
traces of paint. H. 17 1/2 in.  
EA 24619, acquired in 1893



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BRITISH MUSEUM CENTRAL ARCHIVES



# TRAVELLERS FROM

*Behind the amazing Egyptian artifacts  
of The British Museum's evolution and*

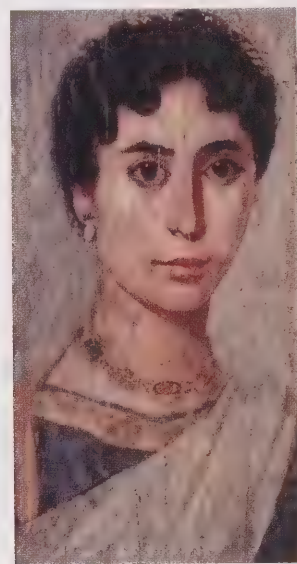
When bidding farewell to the marvellous art objects exhibited in the exhibition *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids* in 2000, little did I expect that four years later, still Egyptian curator at the ROM, that I would be welcoming back some of these old friends. The mag-

nificent alabaster figure of a princess and two impressive wooden statues are returning to Toronto as part of a new exhibition—*Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from The British Museum*. Perhaps the most important overview ever mounted of Egyptian art, the exhi-





Left: The British Museum's new Egyptian Sculpture Gallery in 1836. Below: *Panel Portrait of a Woman*, said to be from Herubayat, Roman period (ca. AD 160–170), encaustic, gold leaf 17 1/2 x 8 1/4 in. EA65346, acquired in 1939, bequest of Sir Robert Mond.



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# AN ANTIQUE LAND

*visiting from London lies an intriguing story  
its influence in the ROM's own founding.*

bition spans the Old Kingdom (2650–2250 BC) to the Roman conquest of Egypt in 31 BC, showing how Egyptian art evolved over two-and-a-half millennia. Most of the objects have never been displayed outside The British Museum; they were allowed to travel only

because the museum was being rebuilt and its Egyptian galleries renovated. In Toronto, we are presented, then, with a unique opportunity to see Egyptian masterpieces from an institution that acquired its first objects from the land of the pharaohs when Canada was



Below: *Pair of Earrings*,  
provenance unknown,  
New Kingdom, 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty  
(1550–1295 BC), gold, diame-  
ter 1 1/8 in. EA 54317–54318,  
acquired in 1897, bequest  
of Sir A. W. Franks.

Right: *Book of the Dead*,  
*Papyrus of Nakht: Worshipping*  
*Osiris*, provenance unknown,  
New Kingdom, late 18<sup>th</sup>  
or early 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty  
(ca. 1336–1294 BC), papyrus,  
painted, 15 5/8 x 36 3/4 in  
EA 10471/2, acquired  
in 1888, purchased via  
Sir E. A. W. Budge.



## THE COMPREHENSIVE NATURE OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM COLLECTION

still called New France and Toronto was but the temporary campsite of Mississauga natives.

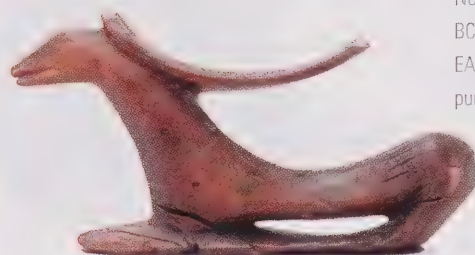
A look at the evolution of The British Museum is intriguing for what it can tell us about how it inspired the ROM's own founding and laid the groundwork for the ROM's key beliefs about what a museum should be.

The British Museum is the granddaddy of most of the world's public museums. When it was established in 1753—thanks to Sir Hans Sloane's gift to The British nation of a fine collection of antiquities—the Louvre still served as the royal palace in France. Although the first British Museum building, Montagu House, contained some 150 Egyptian objects, all from Sir Hans, the collection did not begin to grow by leaps and bounds until the first wave of Egyptomania—a love of things Egyptian, both original objects as well as Egyptian and Egyptianizing motifs used in the design of such things as period furniture—swept England in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As T. G. H. James, keeper emeritus of The British Museum's Egyptian Department, points out in the

current exhibition catalogue, many of The British Museum's most important Egyptian pieces were acquired more by chance than by choice. The famous Rosetta Stone was brought to England as war booty when Napoleon's army was defeated in Egypt and capitulated in 1801; the magnificent head from a colossal statue of Amenhotep III and the bust of Ramesses II (Shelley's *Ozymandias*) were acquired for what amounts to a pittance from Henry Salt, British consul-general in Egypt and an avid collector; two granite lions flanking both sides of The British Museum's Egyptian Sculpture gallery were brought all the way from Gebel Barkal in Nubia and presented to the museum by English aristocrat and collector Lord Prudhoe, 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Northumberland (1792–1865), in 1835. The British Museum's first keeper of Oriental Antiquities, Dr. Samuel Birch (1813–1885), did not satisfy himself with art objects alone; he collected all classes of artifacts. The comprehensive nature of this great collection is exemplified in the *Eternal Egypt* ex-





Top left: *Merire's Scribal Palette*, provenance unknown. New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign of Thutmose IV (ca. 1400–1390 BC), wood, traces of inl., 13 1/8 x 2 3/4 in. EA 5512, acquired in 1848, purchased at Christie's from the sale of the Andrews Collection. Top right: *Head of Amenhotep III*, from Thebes, funerary temple of Amenhotep III, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III, (ca. 1390–1352 BC), quartzite, H. 52 3/8 in. EA7, acquired in 1835 at the sale of the Salt Collection. Bottom: *Headrest in the Shape of a Hare*, provenance unknown, New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1069 BC) tamarisk wood, 7 7/8 in. EA 20753, acquired in 1888, purchased via Sir E. A. W. Budge

ITION IS EXEMPTED BY THE DISPLAY OF ITS VARIOUS COLLECTIONS

hibition by the display of such varied objects as a scribal palette, a headrest, the *Book of the Dead* papyri, and gold jewellery.

This interest in both the artistic and the mundane must have had an impact on Canada's Charles T. Currelly, whose dream of establishing a major museum in Toronto was inspired by a visit to The British Museum in 1902. It was only natural at the time, when Canada was part of the British Empire, that the inspiration for establishing a great public museum would come from England. Interesting ties link the ROM and The British Museum, and both were firmly committed to discovering and understanding the context in which these ever-intriguing artifacts were produced.

In a frequently cited passage from his memoirs, *I Brought the Ages Home*, Currelly recalls his visits to The British Museum, his discussions with the keepers, and a chance encounter with famed Egyptologist Flinders Petrie. That fateful meeting led Currelly to join a team conducting excavations at various sites in

Egypt and eventually to his excavations at Deir el-Bahari, and from there to the establishment of our own Royal Ontario Museum.

In those days The British Museum did not conduct its own excavations, but supported the fieldwork of the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF, now Egypt Exploration Society), an organization of both scholars and amateurs devoted to conducting archaeological research in Egypt. Currelly's work was carried out under the aegis of the EEF. Because the finds were divided between Egypt and the institutions sponsoring the work, some of the objects Currelly excavated in Deir el-Bahari ended up in The British Museum, while other similar pieces that were excavated by Currelly and Swiss Egyptologist Édouard Naville can be seen on display in the ROM's Egyptian Gallery. The material found during the excavations of the Mentuhotep II temple included not only relief decoration but also many objects of daily life and the so-called tomb models. The latter were miniature scenes depicting activities such as baking bread, brewing beer, and storing grain in the



Left: *Standing Statue of Sesostris III*, from Thebes, Deir el Bahri, funerary temple of Mentuhotep II, Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty, reign of Sesostris III (ca. 1874–1855 BC), granite, H. 56 in. Ex. coll. of the Egypt Exploration Fund, 1905

Top right: *Lion of Amenhotep III* Reinscribed for Tutankhamun, from Gebel Barkal, originally from Soleb, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III (ca. 1390–1352 BC), red granite, 43 3/4 x 85 1/8 x 28 5/8 in. EA2, acquired in 1903 from the Egyptian Government. Current reg. *Kings of Egypt*, 18th Dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III, Thebes, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign of Thutmose III (ca. 1479–1425 BC), granodiorite, H. 35 5/8 in. EA 48, acquired in 1928 from the Egyptian Government.



granaries. Made of wood, they were deposited in the tombs to provide the deceased with food supplies for the afterlife. Many of these tomb models are displayed in the ROM's Egyptian Gallery.

The strong ideological connection between the two museums is also evident in each institution's understanding of a museum's role in society, an understanding shared by two early curators of each museum, Samuel Birch at The British Museum and Charles T. Currelly at the ROM. In the words of Birch's son, quoted in the catalogue essay by T. G. H. James, Dr. Birch "saw in The British Museum . . . not only a store-house of historical treasures, not only a show place for holiday recreation of the masses but the true and indispensable home of the proficient master, and the proper and constant resort of the enquiring student." Currelly, likewise, felt very strongly that a great museum should not limit itself to displaying a mish-mash of beautiful pieces, but must be deeply engaged in scholarship, field research, and publication of the collections. After all, the very establish-

ment of the Royal Ontario Museum was in large part the result of Currelly's archaeological fieldwork in Egypt between 1903 and 1908.

Modern Egyptology, whether practised in The British Museum or in the Royal Ontario Museum, combines this traditional study of museum collections with the exploration and conservation of the ancient heritage of Egypt and Nubia directly in the field (see "Canadians in Egypt," page 22). It is obvious for curators that the aesthetic enjoyment of an *objet d'art* must go hand-in-hand with a profound understanding of the context and the culture that produced it.

That is why the *Eternal Egypt* exhibition, conceived by Dr. Edna Russmann, curator of Egyptian art at the Brooklyn Museum, is not simply an assemblage of pretty objects, but a panorama of Egyptian art. The judiciously selected pieces highlight patterns of change while simultaneously revealing the culture's underlying belief system and social structure. In other words, we learn to appreciate the beauty of Egyptian art, to see





Clockwise from left: *Ostrakon Sketch of a Nursing Woman in Pavilion*, probably from Thebes, Deir el Medina, New Kingdom, 19th or 20th Dynasty (ca. 1295–1069 BC), limestone, painted. H. 6 1/2 in. EA 8506, acquired in 1843, purchased at the sale of the Belmore Collection; *Head from a Statue of Thutmose III*, probably from Karnak, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign of Thutmose III (ca. 1479–1425 BC), greywacke, H. 17 1/2 in. EA 986, acquired in 1875, purchased from Selma Harris; *Folding Headrest*, from Akhmim, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III to Horemheb (ca. 1390–1295 BC), wood, 7 1/2 x 7 5/8 in. EA 18756, acquired in 1887.

## SEE WHILE REVEALING THE CULTURE'S STRUCTURE AND BELIEFS

the creativity of the Egyptian artist, to understand the requirements imposed by the religious beliefs, and to see how, despite their provenance from the predominantly funerary and temple contexts, the objects convey the joy of life so characteristic of ancient Egyptians.

Since all the objects in the exhibition either are artistic masterpieces or merit special attention because of their religious or historical significance, it seems presumptuous to highlight some while ignoring others. Nevertheless, like any other visitor I have my own favourite pieces, among them a tiny and worn but masterfully carved ivory figurine of a king, and an almost translucent alabaster statuette of a perhaps royal woman, wearing a thin sheath dress that reveals as much as it conceals her nubile body (ca. 2600–2500 BC). Although the pharaohs are usually depicted as eternally youthful, almost transcending time, for example, the statue head attributed to Thutmose III (ca. 1400), occasionally one encounters images that convey a sense of sadness, pessimism, or even anguish, as is the case with the expression on the

face of the statue of Sesostris III (ca. 1860 BC).

Modern viewers, accustomed to the straight lines and rectangularity present in contemporary art and architecture, may enjoy the subtle way in which Egyptian artists modelled the human body disguised in the simple, cubic form of the so-called block-statues (ca. 1450 BC.). Equally appealing are the ostraka, quick sketches drawn in ink on small limestone flakes. Whether we look at them as simple doodles or as more formal student exercises, they appeal to us because they provide a glimpse into ancient life, a film-frame frozen in time. The design of a folding headrest or a lamp shows the mastery of ancient artisans in combining artistic appeal with the practical function of a utilitarian product. Similarly creative solutions can be found in two-dimensional art, where important religious texts such as the *Book of the Dead* are illustrated with scenes of the afterlife drawn with such mastery and in such vivid colours that we do not need to bother with the hieroglyphic text, but can concentrate on the



The Memnon Colossi  
in Thebes (Karnak)  
Temple at Luxor. When  
the Pradique built the  
originally placed



KRZYSZTOF GRZYMSKI

WHILE TECHNICALLY the ROM's Charles Trick Currelly was the first Canadian scholar to conduct excavations in the Nile Valley (his fieldwork was conducted between 1903 and 1908), with some imagination one could push the birth of Canadian Egyptology as far back as 1859.

Between January and April of that year a young Irish nobleman, Frederick Temple Blackwood, conducted excavations at Deir el-Bahari, the very site where Currelly later made his discoveries. Blackwood, born June 21, 1826, was described as a romantic soul who loved water-colours and the music of Chopin as a young man. Eventually he was made Marquis of Dufferin and Ava. He was, of course, the same Lord Dufferin who served as Governor-General of Canada from 1872 to 1878. Most of the sculptures acquired by Dufferin in Egypt still remain at his home in Clondeboyne, Ireland, although part of the collection was sold in 1937.

More than a century passed between Dufferin's visit to Egypt and the first independent field project ever sponsored by the Royal Ontario Museum (Currelly's work was officially carried out on behalf of the University of Toronto, under whose aegis the ROM began).

After field reconnaissance in Nubia in the Sudan by the ROM's Nicholas B. Millet in 1976, the new age of Canadian discovery of Egypt began in earnest in 1978 with a survey and excavation project in the Dakhla Oasis under the direction of Anthony J. Mills. Far away from the Nile Valley, in the middle of Egyptian Sahara, Mills found a motherlode of treasures—temples, tombs, and towns buried under sand for millennia until they were discovered by Canadian archaeologists.

I myself not only continued the ROM work at various sites in Sudanese Nubia, but also conducted two field campaigns at Pelusium in North Sinai. The city of Pelusium was known by the ancient authors as a "gateway to Egypt" because of its strategic military importance. In Greco-Roman times it was also Egypt's second largest port after Alexandria and a major centre of trade in grains, wine, oil, honey, and textiles.

Among our most interesting discoveries at Pelusium was a structure identified as a hippodrome (race-track). Perhaps the most thrilling aspect of this trip was not the work itself but the realization that long ago this very same place was visited by such impressive historical

painted vignettes instead. The same can be said, of course, about the decoration painted on the coffin of an unknown woman (ca. 1000 BC) or a delicate portrait of a Roman-period woman.

Even putting together the exhibition reminds us about the cultural context of the artifacts. Recently in Toronto, while planning the exhibition's installation at the ROM, a design problem was encountered in that the many large stone monuments were too heavy to be supported by the floor of the special exhibition hall. The very first Egyptian sculpture gallery in The British Museum faced the same difficulty: the heavy statues could not be placed on the domestic flooring in Montagu House, and a new gallery space had to be constructed. In our case, the head of Amenhotep III, a fragment of a statue that must once have been 8-metres- (26-feet-) high, was placed at the entrance to the

exhibition hall rather than with the art of the New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1069 BC) period, where it properly belongs. Although the statue fragment is placed out of chronological order, its location reflects the actual original placement of such monumental sculptures, at temple or room entrances. Amenhotep III was the father of the infamous heretic pharaoh Akhenaten, and possibly a grandfather of Tutankhamun. Two huge statues of him, popularly but incorrectly known as the Memnon Colossi, still dominate the landscape of the west bank of the Nile at Luxor. They also give us a good idea of what the complete statue must have looked like. What is perhaps most surprising about this wonderful royal head is the evident artistry of the sculpture and the care with which it was carved, even though its size tells us that it would have been seen only from a distance.



# IN EGYPT

personalities as Alexander the Great and later Cleopatra, who was fighting there against her brother Ptolemy. This ultimately led to Roman



BRIAN BOYLE, ROM

involvement in Egyptian affairs and to the queen's famous romances with Julius Caesar and Marc Anthony. Although we do not have any objects from Pelusium in the ROM's collections, some scholars believe it is possible that the bust displayed in the ROM's Egyptian Gallery is that of the famous Cleopatra (see "Cleopatra of Toronto?" *Rotunda* Spring 2002).

The work at Pelusium was conducted within the framework of an international salvage campaign aimed at protecting ancient sites in North Sinai. In the Nile Valley proper, a small ROM team directed by Roberta Shaw undertook its own salvage operation, namely, the recording, cleaning, and conserving of a tomb of Amenmose, an Egyptian noble who lived probably during the reign of Amenhotep III (ca. 1390–1352 BC). Shaw and her colleagues made complete photographic records of the decoration and copied all the wall paintings and inscriptions.

Thus the Royal Ontario Museum remains an active player in the field of Egyptian and Nubian archaeology, and we plan that this work, now directed mainly toward conservation and preservation of Egypt's ancient heritage, will continue in the future.

## ***Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from The British Museum.***

The exhibition is organized by the American Federation of Arts and The British Museum. The exhibition and its national tour are made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund. Ford of Canada, Ltd. has also provided support for the exhibition's presentation in Toronto. Additional support has been provided by the Benefactors Circle of the AFA. This event has been financially assisted by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, a program of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture, administered by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund Corporation.

In the 14th century BC, Amenhotep III erected at Soleb, far south in the Sudan, a temple to his divine self. The two "Prudhoe lions" must originally have been placed at the entrance to this temple, but were eventually transported up the Nile to Gebel Barkal, near the Fourth Cataract, where they were placed in front of a royal palace. An inscription giving the name of the Nubian king Amanislo was added to the lions around 250 BC, suggesting that it was perhaps during Amanislo's reign that the lions were taken to Gebel Barkal. In the 1830s the lions were shipped by Lord Prudhoe on an even longer journey, from Nubia to Alexandria and then all the way to London, first to the National Gallery and finally to The British Museum. In the late 1990s, Durham Egyptologist John Ruffle searched in vain for more information about this fascinating, but unrecorded, journey. The logistics of transporting such objects

are complicated nowadays, but we managed, and we now have one of those well-travelled lions gracing the entrance to the *Eternal Egypt* exhibition, next to the head of Amenhotep III.

The discovery in temple ruins in Thebes of a bust of Ramesses II, now in The British Museum, from a broken colossal statue, reportedly inspired the great Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley to write his famous verse:

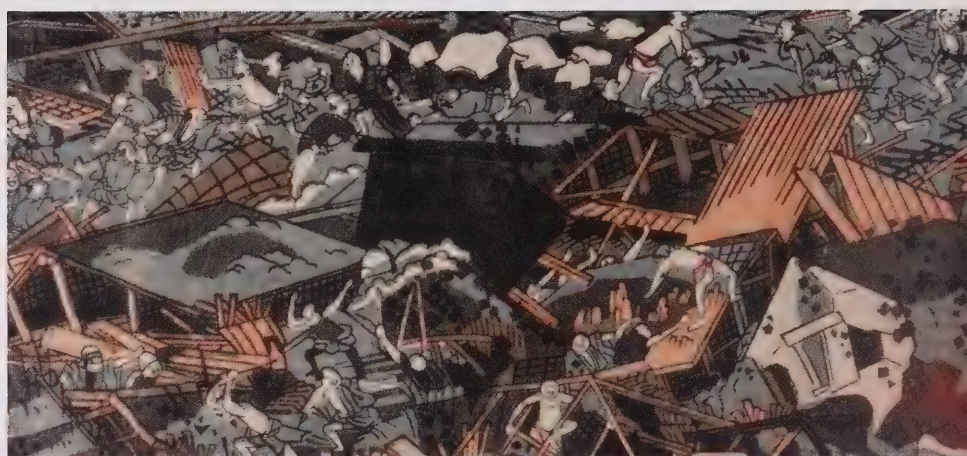
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings  
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!"

While Shelley's eloquent comment on the passing nature of all earthly glory and power is one of the masterpieces of English Romantic poetry, we cannot help but wonder if the poet was wrong. For right here, in Toronto, in front of our own eyes we see the glory that was ancient Egypt, living on. ■



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SHIGA  
BY  
HIDEMI



# Ancient News



ON THE SECOND NIGHT OF THE TENTH MONTH of the second year of Ansei (November 11, 1855) at around 10 pm, Shitamachi, the central section of Edo (present day Tokyo), was struck by a huge earthquake. Both the quake itself and the ensuing fires caused severe damage. Scholars estimate that the earthquake's magnitude was 6.9 on the Richter scale, strong enough to make the earth shudder violently. The death toll climbed to 7000; 5000 people sustained injuries, and an estimated

17,000 buildings collapsed or burned to the ground.

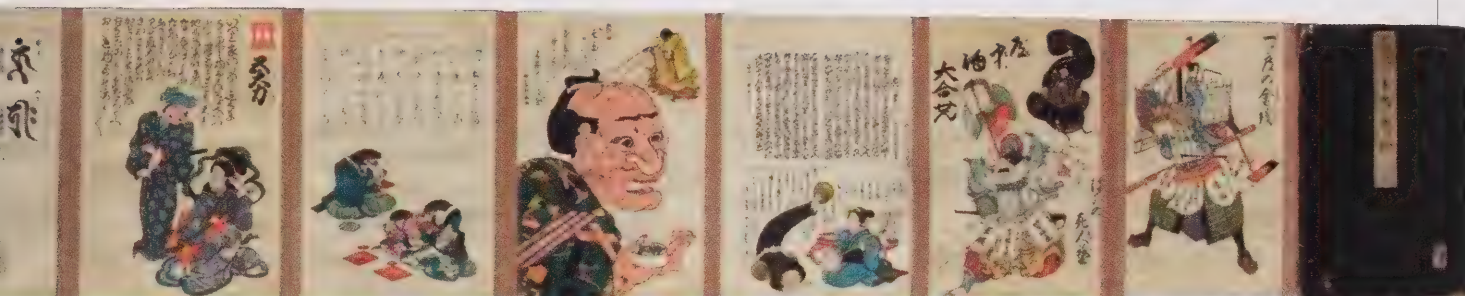
This disaster and its social impact were reported at the time through *kavaraban*, or illustrated accounts that generally included a short text, a colourful picture, and/or dialogue, which were in many ways a precursor to the modern newspaper. Two days after the disaster, the first publication reporting on the earthquake was issued. Reports continued to be issued in rapid succession until the middle of December of that same year. In all, some

Printed on blocks of wood, illustrated accounts of important history for the people of Edo. A rare album of *kavaraban* records an 1855 earthquake.





# That's Fit to Print



300 different *kazariban* designs were published.

Eighty-two sets of these original *kazariban* are held at the Royal Ontario Museum, carefully collected by a Tokyō resident during the aftermath of the earthquake. Carefully, he pasted the *kazariban* onto a long sheet of paper, which he then folded, accordion style, into an album to be preserved for posterity. The size of the prints varies tremendously; the smallest is about 9.3 x 17 cm (3.7 x 6.8 inches), while the largest

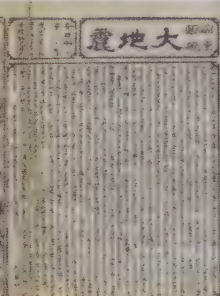
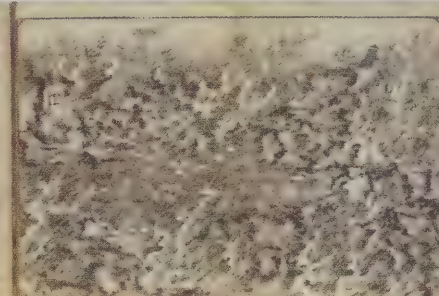
is 73.5 x 36 cm (29 x 14 inches). Now, almost 150 years later, the album has been preserved remarkably well. An exquisite work of art, it also serves as an important historical record of the earthquake, a social record of how people came to terms with the disaster in its aftermath, and a treasure trove of traditional lore.

The earthquake *kazariban* have come to be known as *namazu-e*; *namazu* means "catfish" and *e* means "picture." While the connection between earthquakes

cal events known as *kazariban* were a major source of news for earthquake and reveals much about the people and culture of Edo.



Left: "Jishin Taika Basho Ichiran Zu" or "A map of places which suffered from the earthquake and the ensuing fire." Right: Untitled.



and catfish may not be immediately apparent to the reader, in traditional Japanese folk belief, catfish were thought to cause earthquakes. The "catfish pictures" are woodblock prints, a technique that many people associate with another type of Japanese image, the *ukiyo-e*, or pictures of the "floating world." *Namazu-e* and *ukiyo-e* do share some similarities. In both cases, the target customers were Edo townspeople, so the prints represent the culture of the common people. As well, price, paper size, and production process (including design, engraving, and printing) were also roughly the same for both types of woodblock prints. And the artistic value of both *ukiyo-e* and *namazu-e* can be very high.

One important difference exists, however, be-

tween *namazu-e* and *ukiyo-e*: the subject matter of the pictures themselves was completely different. In a typical *ukiyo-e*, a beautiful woman, an actor, or a scene from nature is shown, while in the *kawaraban*, historical events as well as the experiences and responses of commoners to these events tend to be represented. Appreciating a *kawaraban* is a little like hearing the voice of the past, which makes studying them an intriguing and valuable enterprise.

In the aftermath of the Ansei Edo earthquake, artists and printers rushed to create catfish pictures and put them on the market. In one picture from the ROM's album, the story of how catfish create earthquakes is illustrated. A male figure shown standing on the catfish is a deity enshrined at the city of Kashima.



**“Dai-kassen Zu” or  
“Picture of the Great Battle.”**



He is clutching a gigantic rock known in Japanese as the *kaname-ishi*. As long as the Kashima deity could keep the *namazu* pinned to the ground with the rock, the earth would be safe. But the Ansei earthquake—Ansei (1854–1860) is an era in the Tokugawa period during which the earthquake took place—occurred on an exceptional occasion—in the tenth month of the year. In Japan, the tenth month of each year is called *Kannazuki*, or “the month of no gods.”

This is the time when all Japanese deities leave their posts to meet at the famous Izumo Shrine in Shimane Prefecture. The story goes that while the Kashima deity was gone, he asked the god Ebisu to watch over the *namazu*. Because of good weather, however, the god Ebisu left his position to go fishing, his

favourite hobby. Ebisu enjoyed good luck and was able to catch a basket full of fish. Happy and content, he began to sip his saké and soon became blissfully drunk. Since no one was watching the giant *namazu* under the control of the Kashima shrine, the fish stretched out his body and flopped around, unleashing a huge surge of energy that caused the earth to shake.

*Kawaraban* were published anonymously (see “Extra! Extra!: *Kawaraban* News,” page 28), making it difficult to discern exactly when a particular print was created. Still, by examining a number of these prints, we can trace a process of psychological adjustment to the disaster, from anger immediately following the earthquake to acceptance and even the realization that every cloud has a silver lining—even a disaster will bring some benefits.



## Extra! Extra! *Kawaraban* News

Printed on blocks of wood, the *kawaraban* were a major information resource for the people of the Tokugawa period (1603–1868), serving some of the same functions as the modern newspaper. *Kawaraban* generally consisted of a short text, a colourful picture, and/or dialogue. Prints were usually single sheets of paper 24.5 x 36 cm (9.6 x 14 inches), though two or three sheets were sometimes sold as a set. Every important historical event would generate many *kawaraban*, each addressing the event from a different angle.

The word itself—meaning “roof tile plates”—dates to the Meiji period (1868–1912). Earlier, during the Tokugawa period (1603–1868), they were called *yomiuri* or *tsujiuri*, since they were sold (*uri*) on the street (*tsuji*) with a loud sales pitch (*yomi*). How did they come to be called *kawaraban*? We do not know for sure. Two possible explanations exist: one is that originally hand-chiselled clay

roof tiles (*kawara*), rather than wood, were used as the printing plates (*ban*). Another, less convincing, explanation is that the word originated when an advertisement was distributed on the banks of the river Shijō. The Japanese for “riverbank” 河原 is also *kawara*. The actual kanji character used in *kawaraban* 瓦板 is “roof tile” 瓦, but “riverbank” and “roof tile” have exactly the same pronunciation. Most scholars, though, are skeptical of both ideas.

*Kawaraban* were purchased mostly by Edo townspeople. Depending on the topic and the size of the paper, the price varied from 3 *mon* to 16 *mon*, the *mon* being a unit of the Edo currency. In modern terms, one *kawaraban* cost somewhere between a cup of coffee and a slice of pizza.

Generally it is believed that the earliest *kawaraban* were published in 1615, right after the Second Battle of Ōsaka (the last battle between the Tokugawa and Toy-



In a presumably early picture, the people display their anger toward the *namazu*. With the Kashima deity's support, Edo commoners, both men and women, chastise the *namazu* by beating it with an abacus, sticks, some hardware, and of course their fists. In one panel the Kashima deity stands on a cloud. In another stand the thunder god in red and the wind god in green, both of whom delighted in causing disasters and were thus feared by Edo commoners. These two had come to support the *namazu*. In the background, spirits of the earthquake victims can be seen cheering on their fellow commoners. Surely this illustration appealed to people because it expressed the shock and rage they were feeling in the aftermath of the earthquake.

But other pictures show scenes that do not express

anger toward the *namazu*. One shows the monster *namazu* attacking the people, who are seemingly fleeing in fear. Looking at the picture carefully, however, we notice something strange. The people are wearing smiles on their faces. It is almost as if they were welcoming the earthquake. Why is this? Throughout the Tokugawa period, Edo experienced a series of fires and natural disasters, after which the government was always ready to provide *osukui*, or “help,” in the form of rice and other kinds of food. From their experience of this series of fires, the people of Edo knew that after any disaster, no matter how serious, there would be aid from the government and a reconstruction boom that would provide a chance to make money. While it was devastating to lose family members, peo-

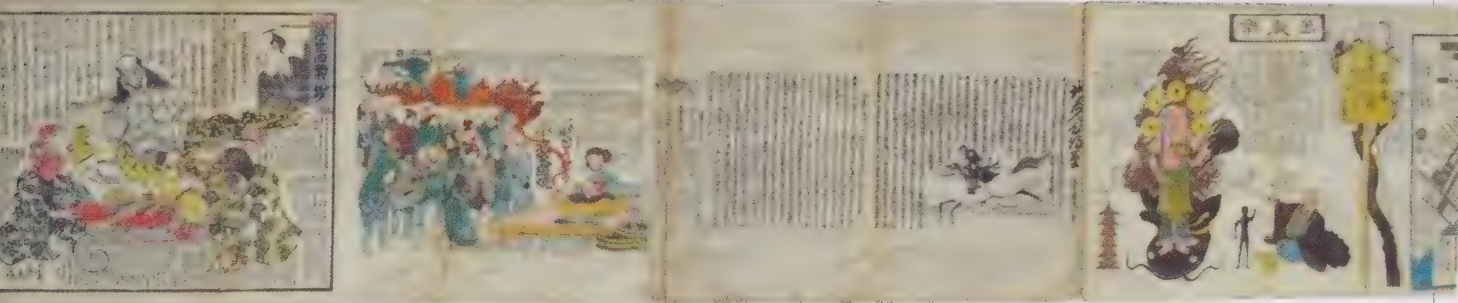


otomi families). However, *kawaraban* did not become popular until the 19th century. One Japanese scholar, Kitahara Itoko, explains the two preconditions for the mass production of *kawaraban*: the knowledge of printing technology, and the existence of a large population sharing common interests. These conditions did not develop in Edo until the 19th century.

Unless there was a noteworthy event, *kawaraban* makers did not publish. Natural disasters, samurai vengeance tales, sightings of rare animals (for example, camels and elephants), and strange stories all qualified. Unlike the modern newspaper, however, *kawaraban* avoided discussing politics, since the authors could be targeted for punishment if they touched on politically sensitive issues.

The Ansei Earthquake *kawaraban* provided information about damage, casualties, and the locations of charity houses (food banks). The principal function of the *kawaraban* was to distribute this information as quickly and to as wide an audience as possible. Edo officialdom, however,

had an interest in controlling the flow of information by censoring the *kawaraban*, an aggravating and time-consuming situation for publishers. News would quickly become stale if it was not released immediately. In the end, the commercial impulse won out and most printers sold their *kawaraban* without waiting for government approval. Because of the dangers involved, most artists and publishers chose to remain anonymous. Yet, despite the fact that *kawaraban* were mostly published without their approval, officials would turn a blind eye for a certain period of time before cracking down, because they knew that the *kawaraban* were an important medium of disseminating information to the populace. In the case of the Ansei Earthquake, a ban on the *namazu-e* was issued a month after the disaster, but the ban was not enforced until another month had passed. Scholars estimate that 300 *namazu-e* designs had been issued before that time, though it is unknown how many designs are left to posterity. The ROM is fortunate to have 82 *namazu-e* designs in its collection.



ple could also perceive the positive side of a disaster.

Another image depicts the relationship between the wealthy merchants and the working-class townspeople. Here, wealthy merchants are literally vomiting pieces of gold, which the workers are rushing to pick up. This vomiting of gold symbolizes the rich people's loss of property. In the disaster, they lost their shops and storehouses. Not only that! The rich were also ordered by the Tokugawa government in the wake of a disaster to practise charity towards the needy. In addition, the rich had to spend a great deal of money to reconstruct their lost buildings, which is another way that wealth was redistributed.

The poem in the picture says:

持丸の はらにたまたず はきいだし ひんのやまいの これで直る世

(*Mochimaru no hara ni tamotazu hakiidashi hin no yamai no korede naoruyo*)

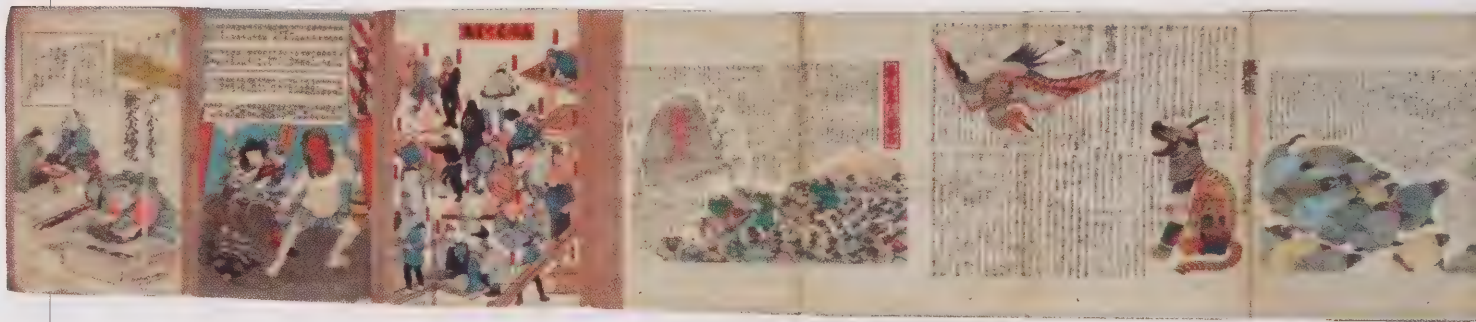
"Rich people cannot keep so much money in their own bellies, so they vomit it out. In this way, the social ill of poverty is relieved and the world is healed."

In other words, if the rich stopped keeping their money for themselves and instead passed it on to workers or poor people, poverty and other social ills would be healed. Note that the final phrase of this poem is 直る世 (*naoruyo*) or "heal the world." A similar phrase is often seen on *kawaraban*: 世直し (*yonaooshi*), meaning "social mending." A different *namazu-e* even suggests that the earthquake can renew the world. The original pronunciation of the phrase *Kanji* 地新, which can be translated as "renewing the world," is *jishin*, ex-



Left: Untitled.

Right: "Mochimaru ch'ja" or "Wealthy Merchants."



actly the same pronunciation as 地震, or "earthquake."

Another *kawaraban* image shows the god Daikoku, a god of wealth, stomping on the *namazu*, his hammer spewing out gold coins for the commoners. Here the shaking of the earth is explained as the god Daikoku shaking his hammer above his head. The poem at the top left says:

大黒の つち動かして 市中に 宝の山を 積ぞめでたき

*Daikoku no tsuchi ugokashite ichinaka ni takara no yama wo tsumuzo medetaki*

"Just as the earth shook, the god Daikoku shakes his hammer, happily dispersing a mountain of treasure in the city."

And the people in the picture are saying to each other, "Earthquakes are actually good. Are they not of

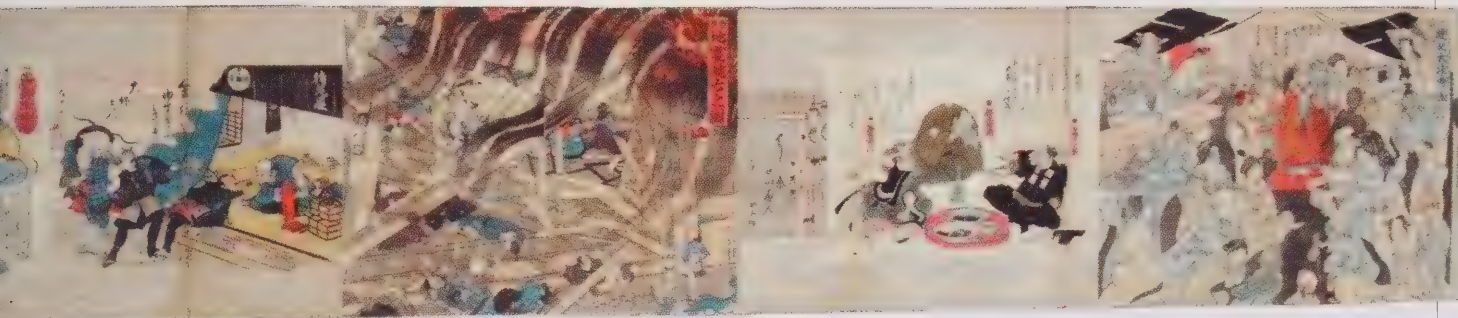
benefit to our society?"

In this image, people see money as lifeblood that must circulate properly before the body politic can be healthy. What the masses really wanted was an increase in the circulation of money, a more equitable distribution that would take some of the money from the rich and give it to the poor. This is what was implied by 世直し (*yonaoshi*), or "social mending."

We have seen how the *namazu-e* expressed the rage and the hope of the people of Edo; the next stage in the story is a formal apology from the *namazu*. In one image, the *namazu* is offering an apology to the assembled gods of Edo. At the front of this assembly is the Kashima deity, wearing a yellow robe. It is interesting to note that in all of the *namazu* prints, none shows the



Left: Untitled. Right: “Happyakubanjin Goshugo Matsudai Jishin Kōbuku no Zu”, or “Eight-Million Gods Will Protect (the Country) Forever and the Earthquake Catfish Surrenders.”



*namazu* apologizing directly to the people. The god Ebisu, dressed in a green robe with red sleeves, has returned from his fishing trip and is acting as a mediator between the catfish and the city gods.

The *namazu*, or catfish, who caused the Ansei Edo earthquake, accompanied by three other earthquake-causing catfish (of Shinshū, Echigo, and Odawara), is wearing a formal *kimono* and applying his seal to a formal apology, a document that expresses his regret for the damage he has caused. It is as if this apology is being accepted indirectly by the city gods on behalf of the people. With this, any lingering anger of the Edo townspeople will disperse and everyone can move on with their lives.

The story I have told—the Edo townspeople’s ex-

pression of anger towards the *namazu*, their relief at receiving food and money after the event, and the formal apology at the end—is only one aspect of the life and culture that are revealed in the catfish prints. The ROM’s collection of *namazu-e* is rich in material for further study. This material should shed light on a variety of topics: the humour and sense of satire of the townspeople, the popular love of kabuki and other forms of entertainment, the spread of information in late Tokugawa Japan, classical Japanese language and literature, folk religion, traditional conceptions of seismology, and 19th-century Japanese art.

This rich collection of fascinating, beautiful, and historically informative *namazu* woodblock prints reveals worlds about its subjects. ■



# The Face That Launched A Thousand

Nearly 100 years ago someone masterminded the large-scale production of forged pre-Columbian artifacts, artifacts so authentic-looking they ended up in museums around the world. Our intrepid archaeologist pieces the story together.

**Adam T. Sellen**





# Fakes?



IN 1998 I was a doctoral student poking around Mexico City in search of material for my dissertation. On one of my excursions, I visited the home of a woman whose mother, now passed away, had once owned a spectacular collection of pre-Columbian antiquities. The daughter brought out the only remaining artifact from her mother's collection, a small ceramic urn in the form of a seated figure, lovingly decorated with orange flowers and green beads. As I studied the effigy, I noticed something had been inserted into the cylinder part of the object. With two fingers I extracted a cellophane envelope containing a brownish powder. I struggled to maintain a neutral expression when she told me it was her mother's remains; my mind raced to think of ways I could gently tell her that her mother's final resting place was a fake.

My encounter with a faux urn was far from uncommon; forgeries of pre-Columbian artifacts are everywhere, especially the Zapotec urn, an elaborate ceramic effigy often found in tombs, from the state of Oaxaca in southern Mexico. At the turn of the last century, demand for these Zapotec urns engendered a local cottage industry that resulted in hundreds of high-quality fakes being acquired by unknowing private collectors. Many of these objects ended up in Museums around the world. The ROM alone has 80 examples.

Thanks to technological advances we can now distinguish fakes from originals. Real Zapotec urns, from about 2000 to 1200 years old, provide a window into ancient Zapotec culture. Fakes distort that picture because they reproduce forms that did not exist in antiquity. Experts tested our Zapotec urns with Thermoluminescence, a chronometric dating method that measures how much time has passed since an object was last heated. But nobody has yet answered the \$64,000 question: Who was making all these forgeries? In the urns themselves, I discovered the answer.

As you would expect, forgers do not sign their creations, so ascertaining forgers' identities requires meticulous detective work. I began by hypothesizing the fakers' *modus operandi*. Although researchers before me had systematically studied the fakes, classifying them and speculating on their origin, few had asked how the forgeries



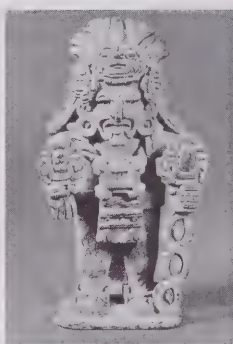
## Fakes based on a genuine urn from the ROM's collection

Left to right: fakes from

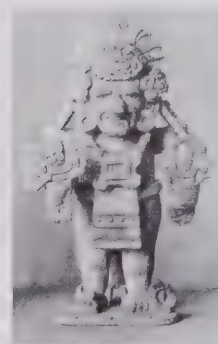
- The Ethnographic Museum, Berlin. Published: in Immina von Schuler-Schomig, *Figurengefasse aus Oaxaca*, Abteilung Amerikanische Archäologie I Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Völkerkunde, Berlin, n.s. ,1970, no. 20. pl. II.
- Musée de l'Homme, Paris. Published: *La décoration Primitive: Amérique Pré-Colombienne*, by Daniel Real. (Paris: Librairie des arts décoratifs, 1923, pl. XVI).
- The George Heye Collection. Published: *Arts du Mexique Pré-colombien: céramiques mixteque, zapotèque, aztèque, etc.* Catalog of an exhibition/auction in the Hotel Drouot, Salle no. 8, April 1929 (Paris: Imprimerie Lahure, 1929. pl. I).
- Rickards's published 1938 article. Published: Constantine Rickards, *Monograph on Ornaments on Zapotec Funerary Urns.*, *Journal de la Société des Américanistes*, n.s. 30 (1) 1938: 147–165. pl. V.

STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN - PREUSSISCHES KULTURBESITZ, ETHNOLOGISCHES MUSEUM

[fake]



[fake]



## ROM fakes

The coiffure for one of the ROM fakes might derive from similar Mayan objects from the island of Jaina, Mexico. This example is from the collection of Jay C. Leff, Allentown Art Museum.



[fake]

BRIAN BOYLE, ROM HM1936 / HM1900 / HM1399 / HM1879 / HM496 / HM1898



[genuine]

[genuine]

COURTESY PEABODY MUSEUM, HARVARD



[fake]

## Mixing and matching

The stand for the Peabody Museum fake at left is the same as one in an illustration published by Daniel Real in 1923 *Décoration Primitive* plate XVI shown at the right. Other details derive from three ROM originals indicated above.



[fake]

[fake]



[fake]

[genuine]

[genuine]

[fake]



were made. In ancient times, many Zapotec urns were fabricated using moulds. A piece of clay would be pressed onto a baked ceramic original from which hundreds of moulded pieces could be produced. The same technique is still widely used by present-day Oaxacan potters who continue to make pottery in the same way as their ancient ancestors. Knowing this, I assumed that if local artisans had been making the fakes they would have used the mould technique.

I examined the urns in the ROM's collection—80 fakes and about 40 genuine urns—as well as those in other museums, and an interesting pattern emerged. The very same specific motifs found on original works in the ROM's collection, such as a face, torso, or unique decoration, also appeared on fakes in museums all over the world. A tiny voice in my head shouted "Eureka!" as I realized that most of the fakes had been made by combining these copied motifs in different ways. Philippa Shaplin, an art historian and pioneer in initiating tests to date Zapotec urns, used the art-historical term *pastiche* for this type of creation. The pastiche urn has a credible appearance because its constituent parts are copied from ancient effigies; however, the motifs are assembled in ways that violate the ancient Zapotec canons of composition. A specific motif that on original urns decorates only the headdress, for example, may be used as a pendant on a fake urn. In a pastiche urn, the visual vocabulary is fine, but the words are arranged according to a different, and meaningless, grammar.

A fake urn in the Peabody Museum, Harvard, succinctly illustrates the point. At least three original urns in the ROM's collection were used to create the face, backrest, and headdress glyph of the Peabody urn. Another bogus urn that I found in a 1920s Paris Museum catalogue had the same base as the Peabody urn, although I have not yet located the original model. What this proves is that the source material for many of these moulds can be linked to originals in the ROM's collection. My hypothesis that the forgers employed moulds to make the separate parts of the urns just as the ancient potters did was confirmed.

By mixing and matching a wide variety of moulds to create each urn, the forgers could make an unlimited number of urns in as



many different combinations as they liked. Often the artisans would change only one or two details on an object to make it unique. For example, the faces and headdresses of two fake ROM urns are different, but the torsos are essentially the same (see photo on pages 32–33). The coiffure on one urn (HM 1900) was clearly inspired by a Mayan object typical of the island of Jaina in the Gulf of Mexico. Use of ancient styles from other areas of Mexico points to the clever sophistication of the forgers, who may have employed photographic catalogues of archaeological objects in order to diversify their visual dictionary. In my mind, this raised a red flag. Consulting published catalogues may seem easily accomplished in today's world, but at the turn of the last century few such works existed, and those that did were accessible only to the literate well-to-do. If the fake urns were being generated by marginalized indigenous artisans carrying out a millenary tradition of pottery making, how did they come into contact with visual material from outside the state of Oaxaca? More importantly, how were they able to access the original material, much of it now in our collection, to make their moulds? Did they find these objects? Or were they being supplied with artifacts and photographs of ancient artifacts? This line of questioning implicated the collector who sold us the objects in the first place. I turned my magnifying glass to how we acquired this collection and to the Victorian character who assembled it. His intriguing life made him a prime suspect.

In 1919, the British Vice Consul in Mexico City, Constantine Rickards, approached the ROM's first head of archaeology, Charles T. Currelly, with an offer to sell his pre-Columbian collection. The group featured many large Zapotec funerary urns and a spectacular Mixtec *lienzo*, a painting on a long swath of cloth that chronicles indigenous history and genealogy. The deal was a perfect match because Currelly was eager to buy a large collection representing this area of the world, and Rickards was anxious to sell because of financial difficulties.

The collection, bought by the Canadians for \$25,000, was erroneously hailed as a gift by the press in Ontario. Only a few plaster casts the ROM had received in donation from the Mexican National Museum were gifts. The rest of the pieces were pur-

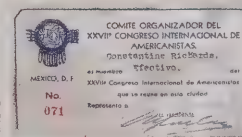
chased. The Canadian newspaper story that spoke of the "gift" was translated almost verbatim in the Mexican press. The part that mentioned the purchase of objects, however, described the objects as duplicates instead of originals. The text may have been altered by Mexican officials who were sensitive to the possibility that large lots of cultural property leaving the country might offend the public.

At the time, few would have suspected Rickards of selling bogus material, given his impeccable credentials and fine upbringing. Constantine Rickards had a good start in life. His father was a respected gold and silver mine owner in Oaxaca and was a personal friend of Porfirio Díaz, the dictator who ruled Mexico with an iron fist for more than three decades. The elder Mr. Rickards wanted his son to become a lawyer, but young Connie, as he was known, was happier exploring the nearby ruins and collecting antiquities. In 1905, the same year his father died, Constantine Jr. sealed his place in Oaxacan society by marrying Adela Durán, the daughter of a well-heeled general. He also inherited some of the richest mines in the country, making him a very wealthy young man.

Young Rickards was exceedingly well connected, partly because he held the post of British Consul in Oaxaca. He was at the beck and call of President Díaz, and performed exceptional feats of protocol for V.I.P. visits.

When Díaz's biographer, the English travel writer Mrs. Alec-Tweedie, journeyed to Oaxaca, all stops were pulled. She was escorted by Rickards on the train, and was met at the station by the governor of the state, a platoon of soldiers, and two artillery wagons for her luggage. Rickards's acquaintances included the famous Maya archaeologist Alfred Maudslay, who also owned a gold mine in Oaxaca, and the writer D. H. Lawrence, who rented rooms from the family. In his late 20s Rickards became very active in the important scientific societies of the period and was a member of almost all of them. He was also a regular contributor to the prestigious Society of Americanists, rubbing elbows with the brightest scholars of the day.

These were halcyon days for foreigners in Oaxaca. They lived like feudal lords thanks to a political climate that favoured



COURTESY GEORGE RICKARDS





COURTESY OF CENTRO FOTOGRÁFICO MANUEL ALVAREZ BRAVO, FONDO JOSE F. GOMEZ



ROM ARCHIVES



COURTESY GEORGE RICKARDS



COURTESY GEORGE RICKARDS

### Constantine Rickards.

Top left: A young Rickards, probably about 19 or 20 years old. Photo circa 1895. Top right: Constantine Rickards. Middle: Constantine Rickards at a dinner for the Society of Americanists, 1929. He is seated between the famous Mexican archaeologists Ramon Mena and Alfonso Caso (fourth from right). Bottom: Rickards towards the end of his life, visiting the pre-Hispanic ruins of Tenayuca, Mexico, circa 1945. Opposite: Rickards's British Embassy identity cards and membership cards from various societies.

their investment capital and a class system that allowed them to exploit the peasants living on subsistence wages. Hans Gadow, an English traveller and naturalist, painted a picture of stark social contrasts when he described a typical evening in the main square of Oaxaca City in 1902. The ladies and gentlemen decked out in smart European dress rambled on a promenade against a backdrop of hundreds of bare-foot natives, the women draped in blue shawls and the men in white cotton.

Perhaps the most prominent foreigners at this time were the wealthy British in Oaxaca, who behaved as they would have at home, with pomp and circumstance. As a model citizen, Rickards was at the centre of his community, as is evidenced by his chairing festivities for King Edward's coronation in 1902. That night the expatriots supped on *paté de pigeons aux croûtes*, and *filet de boeuf truffe*, finishing it all off with a toast to the King, with Champagne Desbordes et fils, 1887. Enveloped in this opulence, they were blissfully oblivious to the gathering storm that would destroy their world.

Before the Mexican Revolution exploded in 1910, forcing the ruling dictator to flee the country, there were signs that not all was well in paradise. A financial crisis originating in the United States towards the end of 1906 resulted in a scarcity of capital and credit. The effect on the Mexican mining industry was devastating, and many operations had to be stopped. Particularly hard hit were the Rickards mines, as Rickards had invested heavily in technology to upgrade the facilities. By 1911 the country was in the throes of revolution and Rickards was in financial meltdown.

He offered his pre-Hispanic collection to the country's National Museum for \$25,000 pesos, but he was rejected, perhaps because of his previous political connections with the former regime. Penniless and surrounded by hostile revolutionaries, Rickards abandoned Oaxaca at the height of its great famine, some time in 1915. According to Ross Parmenter, an American journalist who interviewed surviving family members, he left his native Oaxaca in a boxcar.

Down but not defeated, Rickards established himself in a bureaucratic job with the British Embassy in Mexico City. Short-



ly afterward, he made another desperate and failed attempt to sell his collection to Mexico's National Museum, this time asking for \$40,000 pesos; \$10,000 in silver and the rest to pay the outstanding government taxes on his mines. The museum rejected the offer, arguing that he had asked much less four years earlier. The non-producing mines, with taxes in serious arrears, were confiscated by the government, marking an end to all possibility of regenerating the family's fortune.

Did Rickards's great fall from luxury to financial ruin induce him to commit forgery? Watching his wealth evaporate must have horrified Rickards, and those close to him knew he was troubled that his five children could not enjoy the same standard of life as he had been afforded. The answer to the question is that economic necessity can drive even honest citizens to commit spectacular acts of wrongdoing, especially when trying to maintain appearances.

In addition to a compelling motive, Rickards's story shows that he possessed the right ingredients for concocting a large-scale forgery scam. First, he had an in-depth knowledge of the visual dictionary displayed on the urns—and he even ended up publishing a paper on the subject in 1938. Second, he was well connected to the potential buyers who were often foreign travellers and scientists, and his impeccable credentials ensured their absolute trust.

Finally, having grown up in Oaxaca, he was fluent in Spanish and could have easily come into contact with discreet artisans capable of making the wares.

I had a motive and a clear M.O., but I needed more evidence to make the case. I deduced that if my supposition about his motive was correct, then Rickards must have produced the fakes during an eight-year period, between 1907 and 1915. In the Berlin Ethnographic Museum there is a large collection of Zapotec urns that was assembled over many years by a famous Mesoamericanist and curator of archaeology, Edward Seler. A collection-wide test of those urns in the early 1990s showed that many were fake.

Grouping these fake and genuine urns according to their acquisition years revealed a pattern corresponding to Rickards' financial difficulties and the supposed time

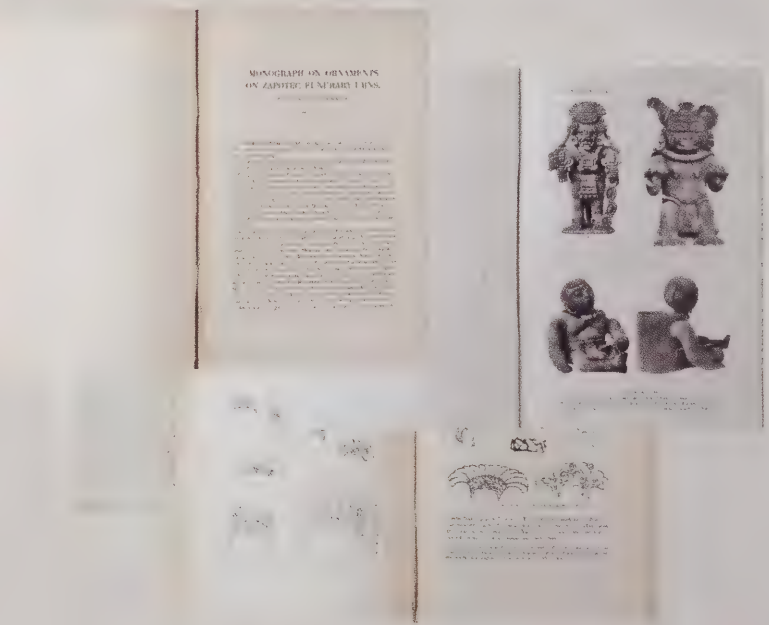
ROM ARCHIVES



COURTESY GEORGE RICKARDS



A





**Did Rickards's fall from luxury induce him to commit forgery?**

Rickards's story shows that he possessed the right ingredients for concocting a large-scale forgery scam. Top: Photo showing the genuine urn in the ROM's collection beside fakes on a shelf in Rickards's collection, circa 1918. Middle left: Fake Zapotec urn now in The British Museum sitting on Rickards's butterfly collection, probably in his home in Mexico City. Middle right: Inexact copy of the original sold to the ROM reproduced in a 1938 publication by Rickards showing photographs of a number of urns he had sold to the ROM. Bottom: Title page and spreads from "the smoking gun," Constantine Rickards, 1938 Monograph on Ornaments on Zapotec Funerary Urns. *Journal de la Société des Américanistes*, n.s. 30 (1) 1938: 147-165.

he generated the fakes.

As I widened my net to include other collectors with well-documented histories of their collecting, such as the wealthy American collector George Gustave Heye and intrepid Italian explorer Guido Calligari, and as before, grouping the fake urns by acquisition dates and visual details, my investigations once again revealed that all roads led to Rickards. My examination of Zapotec urn fakes in collections all over the world demonstrated that almost without exception the great onslaught of fakes hit the museums after 1907. The British Museum, for example, has many fake Zapotec urns that were purchased or accepted as donations by various individuals over the years from 1908 to 1946. The accession records for these urns name three collectors: Alfred Maudslay, Joseph Pyke, and Cecil James. What these people have in common is that they all knew Rickards: Maudslay was an acquaintance, Pyke was a co-worker, and James was his best friend. A small notation on the British Museum's accession record of an urn purchased from Pyke mentions that the urn originally came from Rickards. An old photo from Rickards's scrapbook confirms this information, showing the object in his home, grandly displayed on the case of his butterfly collection.

Yet, the evidence was still too circumstantial. What I needed was a smoking gun. One day, while browsing through Rickards's 1938 publication about his collection, I saw the smoke begin to rise. In this article Rickards published photographs of a number of Zapotec urns he had sold to the ROM in 1919. At first glance, one of the objects would appear to be a genuine urn now in the ROM's collection, but a closer examination of the details and proportions of the urn in the Rickards photograph revealed it to be an inexact copy of the original. Oddly, in his description of the urn in the photograph he did not indicate the object as a copy. Why would Rickards publish a photograph of a copy if he had once owned the original? Equally disturbing is that many museums have copies of this artifact, all of them slightly different in detail: the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin has one, the George Heye Collection has one, and the Musée de l'Homme in Paris has four identical objects. Curiously, Rickards claims in his descrip-

tion of the published copy that it is one of four identical objects found in a tomb, for which he gives a specific location. We know, however, that only one original exists—the one in the ROM. What this means is that Rickards was brazenly trying to provenance the fake objects—to establish a legitimate origin for the fakes he had previously sold by publishing one of them along with a story about its discovery.

There are still many unanswered questions about Rickards's involvement in the fake Zapotec urn industry. Who else participated? We know that he must have employed skilled native potters to make these wares. The results of a recent study that analyzed the chemical composition of the clays in the effigy vessels from the ROM's collection demonstrate that the fakes display a remarkably similar chemical register, while the originals vary greatly. This information suggests that the forgeries were made in one or two places, and with further study we may in time be able to pinpoint the specific location.

Clearly, the potters knew what was going on. Were Rickards's closest friends helping him launder the fakes by selling them to museums? Or were they also duped? Was his wife involved in the caper? Mortified at losing her social standing, which was inextricably tied to her husband's position, she may have turned a blind eye, or even actively organized some of the deals. Without some kind of documentation, a private letter or note, answers to these questions will continue to elude us.

What we can be sure of is that a well-born Englishman, faced with the prospect of imminent financial ruin, resorted to fraud. He became one of the most prolific forgers of the 20th century. Rickards died of a heart attack in 1950 while at work at the British Embassy in Mexico City. In order to avoid what would have been considered an inappropriate location to die, his body was quietly removed from the compound, a fitting end to a life spent maintaining appearances. ■

Funding for this research has been generously supported by the Maya Research Fund. The author thanks George Rickards for the information on his grandfather.





By Peter  
Kaellgren

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E

IN 1959, when the Esso Petroleum Company donated a 200-year-old English silver-gilt Rococo covered cup to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England, the keepers at the V & A knew, tantalizingly, that the cup had a mate—somewhere. But it wasn't until nearly 30 years later, in 1987, that the matching cup appeared, in an auction at Christie's, New York.

Fast forward another 15 years and imagine the ROM's thrill of surprise when this 1753 cup was generously offered as a gift to the ROM in winter 2002. Why the thrill? Richard Edgecumbe, senior curator of metalwork at the Victoria and Albert Museum, has characterized Rococo covered cups of this quality as "grand presentation pieces" and the ROM's example as a "tour-de-force of the goldsmith's art."

The Rococo style is characterized by a rich profusion of C- and S-scrolls, shell shapes, naturalistic motifs, and sculptural forms. Unlike earlier classically derived styles, Rococo object shapes and arrangement of decorative motifs are frequently asymmetrical. Traditionally, the Rococo style has been considered French and has been studied primarily from that perspective. However, gradually during the 20th century, beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, English scholars started to identify and study examples created in London and other major British cities. Often craftsmen and designers who were born and/or trained in Europe produced these. The ROM's cup is a rare British-made example, superbly exemplifying the style's focus on ornament. Diagonal bands of overlapping scales encircle the body of the cup. Such decoration is difficult to execute, and was therefore seldom produced. There are few surviving examples. Applied on top of the diagonal bands is a grapevine with butterflies, caterpillars, and snails. A mound of rockwork with similar naturalistic decoration, including a salamander, decorates the foot. The play of light over the surfaces epitomizes the *contraste* and three-dimensional qualities that the best Rococo designers aspired to create.

Symbols and classical allusions frequently appeared in the repertoire of 18th-century European design. Sitting atop the



cover of the ROM cup is a finial composed of a figure of the infant Bacchus, god of wine, with grapes. The cast figural handles are formed as a free-floating satyr and a bacchante who is tapping her tambourine with a drumstick, which is unfortunately long lost. Both figures are attendants of Bacchus. While such allusions seldom appear on wine-drinking vessels today, during the 18th century images and symbols of Ceres, the goddess of agriculture (i.e., cereals), and Bacchus frequently appeared in dining rooms, where such covered cups would have been displayed on the sideboard for formal meals. Large covered cups might also be used at important celebrations to offer a drink that was passed around a company of people. That tradition has spawned modern-day variations—today in auto racing, the winning driver and his crew consume champagne from a trophy.

For many reasons, the ROM's cup constitutes an extremely significant addition to the Museum's silver collection. First, it is a piece that scholars have long considered exemplary of the Rococo style in the development of English design history. Second, it stands out among a superb group of British two-handled silver cups assembled at the ROM over the years, thanks to gifts from generous donors. Hallmarked in London in 1753–54, the cup is the earliest of eight similar examples bearing the mark of successful British silversmith Thomas Heming and made in the period up to 1761, a period corresponding approximately to the height of the Rococo style in London. And finally, both the ROM and V & A cups are engraved with the arms and crest of Charles Watkin John Shakerley, Esquire (1767–1834). My recent research into the family history has helped to place the pair of Shakerley cups within the historical context of English silver connoisseurship as it has evolved over the centuries.

Decorative objects and furniture in the ROM collection document not just design but also history, evolving technology, function, and social usage. Often these objects can be interpreted more readily than paintings or sculpture in an art gallery. Date and author-

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*A 1753  
silver-gilt  
covered cup  
—a tour-  
de-force  
of the gold-  
smith's  
art—is  
given as  
a gift to  
the ROM.  
A look at its  
storied past.*





ship of British silver are often more easily discovered than those of a painting, thanks to centuries-old hallmarking regulations.

Thomas Heming, whose mark appears on the Shakerley cups, was one of the most prominent goldsmiths in London during the mid 1700s. A covered cup very similar to the ROM's was reproduced on Heming's trade card, or business card, which was engraved to coincide with his appointment as Goldsmith to His Majesty in 1760, a post he held until 1782. Like most goldsmiths, nearly all of what his workshop produced or retailed was silver.

English silversmiths began making the two-handled cup about the mid-1600s. During the 1600s and 1700s, this form was distinctive to English silver, though it was imitated throughout Britain. The earliest type had a bulbous bell-form body or a U-shaped cylindrical body. Most of the early examples were small and held a pint or so of such liquids as caudle and posset, mixed drinks made with wine, spices, milk, and sometimes croutons (of toasted bread). Often, such drinks were served warm and could be shared communally. The larger, more formal, cups had covers and stood on a *tazza* with a spool foot. Many cups did not have covers, though. Tiny ones fashioned from about one ounce of sterling silver were likely dram cups or wine tasters, used for measuring or sampling small quantities of wine or spirits.

By about 1710, the size of the silver cup had increased. Posset and caudle were declining in popularity. It's also possible that the increased size related to the growing importance of such cups as formal status symbols rather than useful drinking vessels. Large versions were usually plain and solid with a U-shaped bowl mounted on a foot resembling a spool or a socle, the turned support under a marble bust. A domed cover with finial was common. The main decoration was usually an engraved cartouche, or frame, enclosing a coat of arms or an elaborate monogram of script initials. While the smaller silver versions of the late 1600s (holding between half a pint and a pint) still continued to be produced up to the 1730s, particularly in centres outside of London, large

Covered Cup,  
silver-gilt,  
English, London  
hallmarks for  
1753-54  
and mark of  
Thomas Hem-  
ing. H. 38.7 cm.  
Wt. 3576 grams  
(115 ounces).  
Anonymous  
gift.

2002.77.1.1-2







Previous spread: Handle formed as a satyr, the half-man/half-goat follower of Bacchus, cast and gilded silver. From the ROM's Heming cup. Handle formed as a bacchant, a female follower of Bacchus, tapping a tambourine with a drum stick. From the ROM's Heming cup.

ones, holding a quart or more, were now an important production item. Some were made as trophies for horse races, beginning a long tradition that led to the modern sports trophy. Others commemorated births and the coming of age of a man at 21 years. Those produced in Ireland, particularly in Dublin, tended to be made without covers until towards 1740.

Though the Rococo first appeared in the 1730s, it took some time for British silversmiths to become conversant with the new style. Early examples often followed the plainer forms of the Queen Anne and George I period. Paul De Lamerie, a celebrated Huguenot silversmith, seems to have been the first to succeed in combining curvaceous Rococo bodies with Rococo ornament by the 1740s. Few British silversmiths were able to equal his achievements, but Thomas Heming, who made the ROM's cup, was exemplary.

By the 1760s, Neoclassical designs inspired by models from ancient Greece and Rome were coming into fashion. Representative of this later phase, but still retaining many Rococo decorative motifs and flamboyance, is a covered cup in the ROM collection made in London, 1767–68, by William Tuite. The elongated hourglass form is typical of the early Neoclassicism. By the 1770s, severely simple ovoid urns and ovoid vase shapes with a pair of handles were displacing the sculptural Rococo forms. To emphasize their elegant profiles, decoration tended to be delicate low-relief medallions and garlands, or finely engraved bands of bright-cutting, a technique in which cuts are made into the surface of the silver to create reflecting surfaces much like miniature sequins. Over time, it was the traditional two-handled cup of the early 1700s with or without a cover, that enjoyed a revival as sports trophy or presentation piece in the 20th century.

I wanted to find out more about the ROM cup's individual history. Thanks to a grant from the European Reserve in the ROM Foundation, I was able to investigate the provenance of the Thomas Heming cup. Tracing the history of a piece of antique English silver can be intriguing. Because of





Top: Two-handled cup with cover, silver with repoussé decoration and cast handles. English, London, 1659-60, maker's mark "HN" with a bird with an olive branch below. H. 16 cm. Wt. 646 grams. Gift of Norman S. and Marian A. Robertson. Middle: Two-handled cup, silver with repoussé and stamped decoration. English, London, 1702-3, mark of William Fleming. H. 3.5 cm. Wt. 21 grams. Anonymous gift. In the past many of these tiny cups were classified as silver toys. However, the silversmiths whose marks they bear did not make any other toys, and silver cups of similar weight are recorded as dram cups in period inventories. Bottom: Two-handled or saucer cup, silver with repoussé decoration. English, Exeter, 1721-22, maker J. Eleston. H. 8.6 cm. Wt. 170 grams. Gift of Mr. Henry Borden. The contemporary engraved initials, dated 1722, have been identified as those of John Law and W. Babbidge, whose wives were sisters. In 1918, a descendant presented the cup to Sir Robert Borden, prime minister of Canada 1911-1920.



a well-defined formula for engraved heraldry, both arms and family crests, these features often identify the family that owned an engraved piece. The engravings may provide a clue to the original owners or to the subsequent history of the piece.

This is the case with the ROM's cup. We know that through his mother, an only child, Charles Watkin John Buckworth was able to inherit the arms and estates of his grandfather, Peter Shakerley, who lived from 1709 to 1781. Upon Buckworth's coming of age at 21 in 1788, his change of name and inheritance was formalized by an Act of Parliament. He became high sheriff of Cheshire in 1791 and married Dorothy, daughter of Jacob Moreland of Copplethwaite in County Westmoreland. They produced two sons and a daughter who lived to adulthood. A property long held by the family, Somerford Park, near Congelton, Cheshire, remained in the possession of descendants until 1925.

The arms of Shakerley impaling those of Moreland engraved on the tambourines held by the bacchante on both the ROM and V & A cups indicate that the engraving was done after Shakerley's marriage, about 1791 or later. Were the two covered cups made for an earlier generation of the Shakerleys or the Morelands? (Sometimes, armorials were re-engraved to indicate the new and higher status of their owners. In many other cases, cups were left the same to indicate from whom they were inherited and to honour the history of the family.)

Noted English silver scholar Christopher Hartop informed me that the Shakerley family papers were in the Cheshire County Record Office in Chester, England. As far as he knew, no one had tried to trace the cups in these papers. Because he had worked at Christie's for many years, Mr. Hartop knew the whereabouts of the papers; he knew also that the auction firm had negotiated their sale to the Cheshire Record Office in 1985. At the time, their main value lay in the numerous deeds and financial records from the Middle Ages. Would these papers help in tracing the provenance of the ROM's cup? I e-mailed the Record Office, described my request, and arranged to visit on April 8 and 9, 2003.

Often such research uncovers very little



information. In this case, I was ecstatic to find an entire ledger documenting Charles Watkin John Shakerley's estate. It was prepared by Robert Winstanley, sworn appraiser, Manchester, and dated October 1, 1834, shortly after Shakerley's death on September 20. Unlike many old documents, the information is written in a neat hand and is fully legible. The appraiser sorted everything into categories, in many cases as they appeared in various rooms, with brief but cogent descriptions. In order of their relative value, these included: eight pages listing the plate, as silver was more commonly known at the time; household furniture; jewels and trinkets (these included numerous watches and seals and a tiara); farming stock and implements; pictures; wine and other liquors; 18 pages' worth of books; ceramics (chamber sets and bidets were included with the furniture); horses and carriages; linens (mostly towels, napkins, washing and polishing cloths); glass; and Shakerley's clothing, which was listed at a paltry £18 and apparently did not include any undergarments. Almost amazingly, the appraiser was able to indicate credibly which items in the 15-page ceramics inventory were early English porcelain and which were Chinese Export wares.

At the time of his death, C. W. J. Shakerley was a very wealthy man, owning estates totalling over 12,000 acres as well as mines in various parts of England. More than a quarter of the value of the contents of Somerford Park, his country estate, derived from "plate," or silver, and Sheffield plate, primarily for table use. Before the 1800s when banks were becoming an established part of life, many British families held a significant portion of their wealth in silver. And why not? It was the same standard as the coinage and could be converted into cash if required.

The plate was carefully separated into two categories. The second, smaller category, valued at £358 4/9p (358 pounds, four shillings, and ninepence), included items that appear to be mostly of a modest, useful nature, "left to me by my late Grandfather . . ." This group was willed to Shakerley's younger son, Geoffrey Joseph Shakerley (1800–1878).

993.53.234



Above: Two-handled cup, silver with cast handles. Irish, Dublin, 1719–20, no maker's mark. H. 23.8 cm Wt. 1757 grams. Gift of Norman S. Robertson and Marian A. Robertson. A contemporary engraved inscription on the bottom indicates that this was the gift of a grandmother to her new grandson. Below: Two-handled cup and cover, silver with cast decoration. English, London, 1740–41, maker Christian Hillan. H 33.7 cm Wt. 2739 grams. Gift of the Estate of Mrs. G. Howard Ferguson. The contemporary engraved crest is that of Philip, fifth Viscount Wenman of Tuam, who assumed his title in 1729. This cup follows the formula for early English examples of the Rococo style: a plain Queen Anne or George I body with Rococo decoration confined either to the engraved cartouche for the coat of arms, crest, or initials or sometimes rather awkwardly to the cast handles and applied decoration.

958.24.3







Above: Two-handled cup and cover, silver, with repoussé decoration and gilding, probably added later. English, London, 1767–68, maker William Tuite. H. 39.4 cm. Wt. 3086 grams. Bequest of Miss L. Aileen Larkin. Kenneth L. Ashurst, a specialist in heraldry, has identified the contemporary arms as those of Jarrit Smyth and his wife, Florence Smyth, nee Smyth. Below: Two-handled cup and cover, silver with cast handles and finial. English, London, 1748–49, maker Thomas Gladwin. H. 31.7 cm. Wt. 2012 grams. Gift of Norman S. Robertson and Marian A. Robertson.



The other plate consisted of more up-to-date and sumptuous goods, which C. W. J. Shakerley's will describes as "the silver plate purchased by me." This plate along with nearly the entire contents of Somerford was bequeathed to his elder son, Charles Peter Shakerley (1792–1857).

Charles's inheritance included the two silver-gilt cups, or urns, which are listed in a section that seems to relate to the formal dining room. Presumably they were displayed to either side of a large silver-gilt charger that appears just above them in the list. This constituted a typical Regency sideboard display for formal meals. They were valued at £156 10/0. Interestingly, even though the appraiser recognized the cups as being "Antique," they were not the most highly valued plate on his list.

During the early 1800s, there was a growing trade in antique silver in London. Such pieces provided the ornate decoration and ostentatious appearance so admired at the time but were less expensive than new plate because they were second-hand and not subject to the higher cost of contemporary labour. The ledgers from a long-established firm taken over by Robert Garrard in 1792 are preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Containing detailed entries of orders for silver being made and invoiced to a wide range of customers, the so-called Garrard Ledgers reveal changes in taste over the years.

Beginning in the early 1800s, a number of entries document the sale of large mid-18th-century covered cups to the gentry and nobility, including one from the Williams-Wynn family, who lived near the Shakerleys and were closely connected to them by marriage. Following the trend-setting example of the Prince Regent, who became George IV in 1820, many people then preferred to have plain antique silver gilded. Thus, it is very likely that the gilding and the Shakerley arms and crest are in fact reflections of ownership and taste in the Regency period, c. 1800–1830, rather than when they were first produced in 1753.

Though tastes may change and monetary values fluctuate, the ROM's Heming cup will always retain its excellence as an example of the English Rococo style because of its inherent qualities of craftsmanship and design. ■



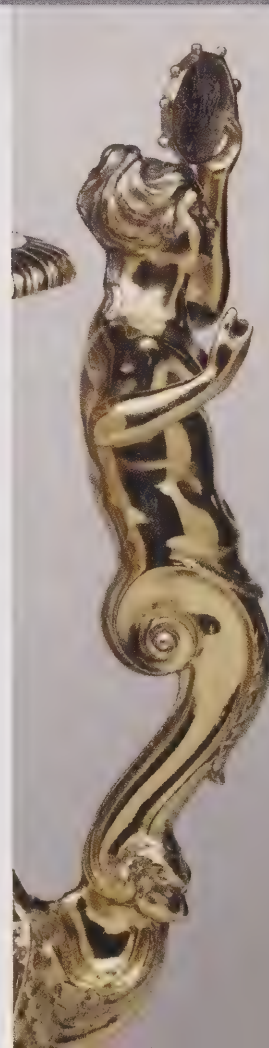
# Silver Handles

In the mid 1700s, the London silver trade was very complex and involved a number of specialists. A specialist silversmith may have provided the figural handles on the ROM's Shakerley cup. The bacchante and satyr figures on the handles had originally been created for an enormous silver wine cistern or bottle cooler made by Charles Frederick Kandler with London hallmarks for 1734. Today the cistern is known as the Jerningham Wine Cistern, named for a former owner. The satyr and bacchante were designed by the English engraver George Vertue (1684–1756), who is best known as the first writer on the history of English art. Scholars consider that Vertue's designs were sculpted by John Michael Rysbrack (1693–1770), a Flemish sculptor who enjoyed a successful career in England. With a width of 167.8 cm (5½ feet) between the handles, the Jerningham Wine Cistern is one of the largest pieces of silver ever executed in London. It was so costly that it ended up being offered as a prize in a lottery. The Empress Anna of Russia purchased it from the winner, and it still survives in the Kremlin today. The cistern became well known through engravings, which circulated much like posters do today.

Covered cups that are nearly contemporary with the cistern, made by Kandler and by Heming, including the ROM's Shakerley cup, have almost identical figural handles to those sculpted by Rysbrack. This suggests a couple of possibilities for the period 1734–61 in the London silver trade: that there was a specialist craftsman casting and chasing such handles for the finest covered cups, or that perhaps models cast in lead, copper, or bronze made from the original handles were available and used by more than one craftsman. Eventually the method by which the handle pattern was popularized may be determined.



Above: Cover of the Thomas Heming cup showing the figure of the infant Bacchus, god of wine. Below left: Handle formed as a satyr, the half-man/half-goat follower of Bacchus, cast and gilded silver. From the ROM's Heming cup. Below right: Handle formed as a bacchante, a female follower of Bacchus, tapping a tambourine with a drum stick. From the ROM's Heming cup.





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# THE SNOWS OF YESTERDAY

FEATURE REVIEW

## Memoirs of a Less Travelled Road: A Historian's Life

By Marcel Trudel

Translated by Jane Brierley

(Véhicule Press, Paper: \$19.95)

BORN IN 1917, Canadian historian Trudel recalls not only his own path through the 20th century, but that of Quebec as well—its emergence from the pervasive and persistent influences of the *ancien régime*.

A sleigh-maker's son, Trudel was orphaned at five and sent to adoptive parents, where his bedroom was also the family bathroom, his bed a corn-leaf mattress in the bathtub. Intrigued by the printed word, the schoolboy won book prizes for academic excellence, including, at age 9, a 783-page, fine-print, life of Pope Leo XIII. A circuitous path led him to a Franciscan college, from which he was expelled, and eventually to Laval University, Harvard, and a career as an author and professor (Laval, Carleton, Ottawa).

Trudel's aural and visual acuity, combined with the historian's sensibility, make for keen observations about the fabric of day-to-day life and language. In his childhood, the village doctor was "Monsieur Docteur," his wife "Madame Docteur," his daughters "Les petites Docteurs." To people of the countryside downriver from Île d'Orléans, the St. Lawrence was "the sea," a perfectly logical appellation in view of the river's oceanic power in that

region. From a height at the north end of this island, one can see the pattern of the ancient seigneurial lands, "the same geometric quilt our ancestors observed and that Gédéon de Catalogne drew on his map of 1704." The word *tourtière* is an amalgam of *tourte* (passenger pigeon) and "hare." *Tourte et hare*.

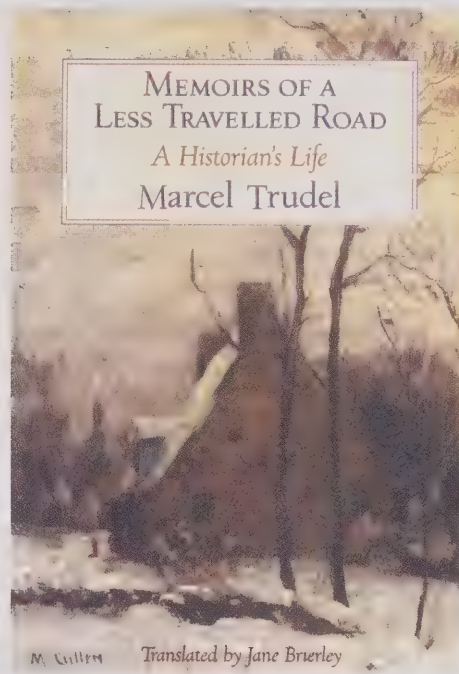
While at Harvard (1945–47), Trudel encountered in New England what he described as "the last generation of Franco-Americans," former *habitants* who in the late 19th century had left the land of *chez nous* to find what Ringuet

termed "un bon boss et un job steady" in his *Canadien* farm-ageddon classic, *Trente Arpents*. Trudel also illuminates the world of the Canadian historian in the second half of the 20th century.

Having earned the sobriquet "Monsieur Nouvelle-France," Trudel reflects modestly, but also incisively and picturesquely, on what the historian can truly know about a vanished world:

"Looking at 17th-century New France, I'm like a spectator separated from the stage by a wall. Through this wall, thanks to a few chinks, I get glimpses of what's happening . . . There are plenty of people on the other side of the wall, but how can I count them? How can I describe people when I only see bits of them? I hear voices,

but the words are unintelligible. I'd like to ask questions, but they can't hear me—they aren't even aware I'm there, trying to get to know them."



Canadian history will be prominent in the ROM's First Peoples Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Heritage Galleries, Renaissance ROM initiatives opening in December 2005 and 2006. The Museum's collection of early French-Canadian furniture, founded by ethnologist and folklorist Marius Barbeau (a legend in himself)

and the ROM's first director, C. T. Currelly, is showcased in *Rococo to Rustique*, by Donald Blake Webster, published by the ROM. The book also includes the French antecedents of New France style, seminal pieces from the ancestral regions of the earliest colonists, especially Brittany, Normandy, and south to Saintonge.

REVIEWED BY GLEN ELLIS



## **Goddess: The Classical Mode**

By Harold Koda

(The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Yale University Press, Cloth: \$49.95)

Weaving together images of present-day supermodels clad as goddesses from Greek and Roman antiquity, with a selection of their thespian counterparts from 20th-century film, and prototypical classical statuary,

*Goddess* unfolds the persistence of an ideal, variously elegant, romantic, and provocative.

## **Steps to Water: The Ancient Stepwells of India**

By Morna Livingston

(Princeton Architectural Press,  
Cloth: \$82.50)

Monuments to the sanctity of water, these exquisitely sculpted edifices were

designed to capture and conserve rainfall from the monsoons of western India. Sites for drinking and bathing purposes, as well as for rituals and festivals, they embrace the spiritual and secular. This tour de force of publishing and photography confirms the maxim that the eyes of India see only in colour.

*Glen Ellis is head of Publications, Royal Ontario Museum.*

## R O M B O O K S

THE FOLLOWING EXCERPT is from *Journey to the Ice Age: Discovering an Ancient World*, by Peter L. Storck, co-published by the ROM and UBC Press. Available spring 2004.

AFTER THREE YEARS in the Blue Mountain/Kolapore uplands and nearly two decades in the lowlands of south-central Ontario, looking for the long-abandoned trail of an Ice Age people, it is difficult sometimes not to feel their presence or imagine the environment in which they lived. On occasion I have come close to being transported back to that distant time. Sometimes it happens while I walk slowly across the sand of a fossil beach, far removed in space and time from any water today. Glancing up at the gulls wheeling overhead I wonder if those birds inherited a genetically encoded species-memory of what once was. Not likely, I tell myself. But their screeching cries call that ancient beach into my present and make it almost real. The sand becomes the beach of a glacial lake, washed by waves just beyond my ability to see and hear, and warmed not by the modern sun I feel on my shoulders but by the ancient sun of an Ice Age summer. It is then that I feel the presence of the caribou and the hunter who may not be far behind, and yearn to see into that distant time and experience it



directly, emotionally.

I have also come close to that distant past when seeing, from the floor of the Beaver Valley, the first storms of winter obscuring the heights of the Blue Mountains. What must the Ice Age storms have been like? How much more severe? Can the rushing clouds of white, driven by winds of silent snow, be anything but a feeble masquerade of the Ice Age winter that drove animals and people alike to the shelter of spruce forests much farther south? And what of the long trek back in the spring of the year? How many human dramas occurred along the way before the ancient pathways climbed once again to the source of the toolstone, renewal, and another season of life?

These are scattered impressions based on the feel of sand beneath the feet and the picture in the mind's eye of a line of hills emerging from beneath the retreating ice sheet, waves lapping against a steep shore bluff or milky white glacial meltwater coursing down a valley that today is empty and silent. This is a parallel world to our own, yet very different; gone, yet still strongly imprinted on the modern landscape.

Unlike the forces of nature, the people who lived in that ancient world left much more ephemeral traces of their passing, just a few fragments of broken tools scattered here and there on the landscape. Yet the tools are silent reminders of those who might otherwise have been forgotten.

These dream-like visions—of a vanished world and a long-dead people—intrude on the disciplined part of the mind, the carefully trained part that uses the methods of science to assemble ever more data, always trying to delay for as long as possible, perhaps indefinitely, the hypotheses and then the conclusions that are continuously forming and threatening to become fixed in the mind. The scholar fights this to remain open minded and guard against bias or error. But the visions spring from emotions, and neither will be denied. From them come images of what may have been.



## PALEOSCENE

# THE CASE OF THE HEADLESS HOMOIOSTELES

*Uncovering the identity of an odd-ball sea fossil  
—visions of leeches and braided gimp.*

DOUG McAVOY of Commanda, Ontario, is a dedicated amateur paleontologist, a keen fossil collector (see “Seeing Stars” in *Rotunda*, Summer/Fall 2003), and a frequent correspondent. He recently sent in an intriguing e-mail enquiry, accompanied by an equally intriguing photo. Doug wrote: “On my last trip to J. D. quarry, I was working the floor of the first sump. I found some beautiful specimens right under the gravel on the surface. What are these creatures that look like braided gimp turning into a leech?”

—D.M.R.

### Dear Doug,

THANKS FOR SENDING in yet another of your wonderful paleontological challenges! Your reference to “braided gimp” may mystify readers of the younger generation, but for those of us Baby Boomers who grew up attending summer craft camps, the phrase conjures up fond memories of painstakingly weaving key chains and bracelets from long strands of brightly coloured plastic lace—“gimp” to the uninitiated. The narrow ends of the curved, tapered portions of your strange little fossils certainly resemble the woven plaits of my own childhood craftwork. At the opposite end, each fossil expands into a broader and apparently segmented termination, a form looking for all the world like a contracted freshwater leech (evoking another distant memory of childhood summers, exploring along pond edges for the dreaded undulat-



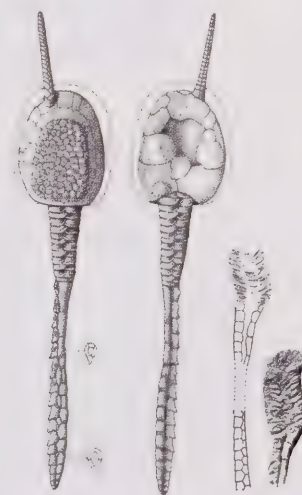
DAVID RUDKIN, ROM

ing blood-sucker!). The identity of your odd-ball specimens has nothing to do, of course, with either laces or leeches, although the real story might seem equally far-fetched.

First of all, we need to fill in some geological background. The quarry you refer to is located just east of Lake Simcoe, excavated into Ordovician age (approximately 450 million-year-old) limestones and shales called the Verulam Formation. These rocks originated as sea-bottom deposits from a time when what we now call Ontario was in tropical latitudes and covered by a shallow, warm ex-

DAVID RUDKIN

tension of an ancient ocean. A remarkable diversity of invertebrate animals lived in this sea and their re-



FROM: TREATISE ON INVERTEBRATE PALEONTOLOGY,  
1967 GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA AND THE  
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

Top: Photo of a small slab of limestone with several of Doug’s mystery fossils — the “tails” of Syringocrinus, an extinct homoiostelean echinoderm (slightly larger than natural size). Bottom left: Artist’s reconstruction of a complete Syringocrinus animal (upper and lower view), and sketches of actual specimens (about one-half life size).



mains are now found as fossils in the lithified (literally, "turned to stone") sediments of the Verulam Formation. The rocks are now actively extracted and crushed for use as high-quality aggregate, but they also yield an array of fine fossils to careful and knowledgeable collectors. Which brings us right back to your discovery . . .

The zoological affinity of your mystery specimens lies with the large and important group of sea-dwelling animals known as Echinodermata, those "spiny-skinned" invertebrates that typically display a unique pentamerous (five-rayed) symmetry of body parts. Familiar echinoderms include modern and fossil starfish (sea stars and brittle stars) and echinoids (sea urchins and sand dollars); less immediately identifiable are their cousins the holothurians (sea cucumbers) and crinoids (sea lilies and feather stars), as well as a number of obscure and entirely extinct forms known only from the fossil record. Not only do your fossils fall into the last category, meaning that they have no direct

living descendants, but they also belong to a subgroup of echinoderms that lack any sign of the familiar pentamerous shape. To make matters even more confusing, your fossils are incomplete. To make a very long story considerably shorter, however, I can simply tell you that your specimens are pieces of a very strange echinoderm called *Syringocrinus*, which, despite its name, is NOT a crinoid but a member of an extinct subgroup with a near-unpronounceable appellation, homoioostelean homalozoans. It is much easier to use the more colloquial term "carpoids," which also applies to the closely related strophorans and homosteles. Your carpoid bits comprise the animal's stem or tail-like part called the stele. The missing pod-shaped theca (plated body covering) was attached to the broader (leech-like) end, and a short, narrow, arm-like piece extended from the opposite end of the theca. Fragments of these weird things are fairly common in the Verulam Formation, but complete specimens with the stele, theca, and

arm all intact are very rare. We don't know very much about how the seemingly bizarre carpoids made their living in the ancient seas (this is reflected in the name for the type species of the beast: *Syringocrinus paradoxicus*), but it is presumed that they lay recumbent on the sea floor, possibly using the stele to propel themselves along the bottom. It appears most likely that carpoids fed on small particles of organic matter gleaned from the sediment through the use of the short arm.

Carpoids in general, and homoioosteles in particular, are known from Upper Cambrian to Lower Devonian rocks (about 520 million to 400 million years old); *Syringocrinus* itself is restricted to the Middle Ordovician and seems to occur only in Ontario.

Thanks once again for keeping us informed of your discoveries, Doug. Good luck in your future collecting endeavours!

*Dave Rudkin is an assistant curator in the Museum's Department of Palaeobiology.*

Design: Chris Nicholson

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## ROM ANSWERS

# ALL ABOUT CERAMICS

*A primer on interpreting English china.*



986.122.1.1-3

Demitasse Cup and Saucer, bone porcelain painted overglaze yellow enamel with gold transfer-printed decoration. Sterling silver cup holder. English, Aynsley, c. 1910; cup holder marked "BIRKS" and "STERLING." H. (cup) 5.5 cm. ROM collection, gift of Miss Dolores Backhauser. Demitasse cups and saucers were popular for the strong coffee served around 1900. Because many Canadians bought Aynsley bone porcelain, Birks was able to commission special models from the company.



956.44.2

Ewer, salt-glazed stoneware with incised and painted decoration. English, Doulton, Lambeth, dated 1873, "ABB" (signature of Arthur Barlow) and production number 843. H. 23.2 cm. ROM collection, gift of Doulton & Co. (Canada) Ltd.

### Dear ROM Answers,

MY MOTHER OWNED a large number of ceramics, mostly things inherited when elderly relations died in England. I have the job of sorting out mother's china and distributing it to various cousins, nieces, and nephews. I would like to be able to tell them something about the pieces when I pass them on and am wondering whether there is research I could do. I expect that most of the ceramics are English and probably not terribly old. Most of them are marked. Can you suggest books that I could consult at a public library? Any help would be appreciated.

L.M., KELOWNA, B.C.

### Dear Reader,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ENQUIRY. Since ceramics are used by everyone and often last for a long time, museum curators receive many questions about them. First, I suggest that you look at all of the pieces to identify their bodies or the material from which they are made. I am going to illustrate some typical pieces from the ROM collection.

PETER KAELLGREN

Pieces that are porcelain will transmit light (i.e., they are translucent) when they are held up to a light bulb.

Usually porcelain is white and fractures and flakes like glass. Continental porcelain, for example that made at Limoges, France, or Meissen, Germany, is almost always hard paste, which means that it is made from kaolin (china clay) and other mineral ingredients, and fired at a high temperature. Chinese and Japanese porcelain is also hard paste. English porcelain is almost always soft paste, which means that it is fired at a lower temperature. Typical formulas include bone ash (burned up animal bones) or soap stone (steatite) as an essential ingredient.

Earthenwares can be white or any colour and are fired at a wide range of

BRIAN BOYLE, ROM





973.407

Tea plate, bone porcelain with overglaze brown transfer-print painted in enamel colours. English, Royal Staffordshire Bone China, manufactured by Thomas Poole, Cobden Works, Longton, c. 1929–40. Pattern no. 5863. Diameter 17 cm. ROM collection, gift of Mrs. Frances Wilson.



974.180.1

Dinner Plate, hard-paste porcelain with overglaze transfer print and gilding. Czechoslovakian, c. 1910–1935, pattern named "Bridal Rose" in the mark. Diameter 24.8 cm. ROM collection, anonymous gift. 974.180.1 The country name "CZECHOSLOVAKIE" in the mark suggests that the plate was made for customers who did not speak English.

temperatures. They are opaque, meaning that they do not transmit any light when held up to a bright source such as a light bulb. Earthenwares, which include formulas such as ironstone china, are usually utilitarian wares such as mixing bowls and everyday dishes. A second, smaller category of earthenwares, called stonewares, is often grey or brown. Like hard-paste porcelain, stonewares are fired at a high temperature, but, in contrast, their bodies often have a coarse or gritty texture. The stoneware body is used to make utilitarian wares and studio pottery. Since the 1960s, well-designed, dishwasher-proof stoneware dinner and tea services, casseroles, and mugs have been very popular with the public.

Occasionally one finds ceramics that are tin-glazed earthenware. These have a thick, white opaque glaze applied to a body that looks like a red or yellow terra cotta flowerpot. Most are ornamental plates, vases, and figurines. Learning to recognize the various bodies may sound tedious, but it can help to indicate where you might look for information about a piece.

When marks are found on pieces they can be quite helpful. Usually they are located on the bottom. Impressed marks are used less often because they become distorted when the body dries and is fired. Impressed numbers can represent the model number, the date of production, or other manufacturing information. The name of a country in-

dicates a date after 1891, when customs regulations introduced into Britain and the United States required the country of origin to be named. In 1921, U.S. customs regulations were made more stringent, and the wording usually included "MADE IN . . ." with the name of the country. Knowledge of history and geography also helps when determining a piece's age from its marks. If you find anything marked "MADE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA," for example, you know that it was not made before the country came into existence in 1919, but it also predates the recent division of that country into the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Inexpensive giftwares were made in Japan, mainly for the five and dime stores. Those marked "MADE IN OCCU-

## WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

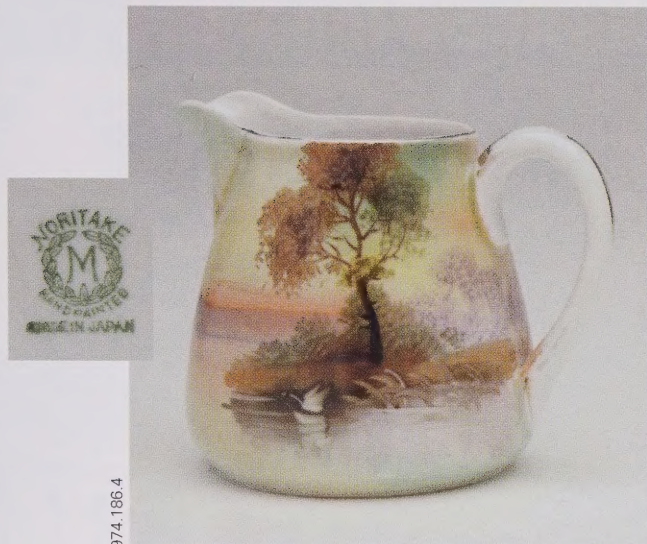
If you own furniture, silver, glass, metalwork, ceramics, textiles, or small decorative objects that may have an interesting past and have aroused your curiosity, this column is for you. Send a clear colour photograph (or 35-mm colour slide) of the object against a simple background, providing dimensions, a description, any markings, or any known details of its history to: ROM Answers, c/o *Rotunda* magazine, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park,

Toronto, Ontario M5S 2C6. Be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope large enough to include any photos that must be returned to you.

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Letters will be acknowledged as staff time permits.





Pitcher, hard-paste porcelain painted in overglaze enamel colours and gold. Japanese, Meito China Company, Noritake China, c. 1921–1935. H. 7.6 cm. ROM collection, gift of Miss Mary Carr and Mary Appleby in memory of their grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. John Appleby, and an aunt, Mary Alice Stonehouse.



Dessert Plate, bone porcelain with transfer-printed decoration with the bunches of heather and the border hand-painted in enamels. English, T. G. Brown-Westhead Moore & Co., Hanley, Staffordshire. Pattern registered September 25, 1868. Diameter 22.9 cm. ROM collection, bequest of Diana K. Hall.

PIED JAPAN" relate to the American period of occupation, 1946–52. Marks such as "DISHWASHER SAFE" first appear around 1960, and "MICROWAVE SAFE" is likely to be after 1980.

You indicated that most of the china came from England. In that case, there are many good books for you to consult. The English ceramics industry is concentrated in Staffordshire. By the mid 1800s, the various potteries were striving to create a favourable consumer image for their wares, and Canada, as a colony, provided an important market. Most used transfer-printed trademarks, which could include their name or the name of the body or the pattern. Do not be deceived by a date in the mark. Many English potteries include their founding date there. The best source for English marks is Geoffrey Godden's *Encyclopaedia of British Pottery and Porcelain Marks* (1964 and later editions).

A diamond-shaped registration mark was used between 1842 and 1883 to copyright a printed pattern or, when impressed, the moulded shape of an article. John P. Cushion's *Pocket Book of British Ceramic Marks* (London: Faber & Faber, 1976, and later editions) de-

codes the diamond marks and includes a full list of the manufacturers. Between 1884 and 1910, the word "Registered" or "Rd." with a number was used to indicate a copyrighted design. Later it appears less frequently. Fine bone porcelain tea wares and tablewares often had a number painted on the bottom, which represented the pattern. Some pre-1870s English wares had no marks other than this. These can be identified only by comparing the pattern or shape with those illustrated in books. Model numbers also appear on figurines such as those made by Royal Doulton. Although many books focus exclusively on a single company such as Wedgwood, Doulton, Worcester, etc., Geoffrey Godden illustrates a helpful range of typical pieces in *An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of British Pottery* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1966) and *British Pottery: An Illustrated Guide* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1974).

John Cushion's two books, *Pocket Book of German Ceramic Marks* (London: Faber & Faber, 1961) and *Pocket Book of French & Italian Ceramic Marks* (London: Faber & Faber, 1965) are very helpful in identifying continental ceramics, be-

cause the author made an effort to record many of the marks used on the popular ceramic wares that were imported in quantity from Europe around 1900. Both English and continental ceramics were sometimes marked with the name and address of a retailer in Canada or the U.S. It was not unusual for buyers at Birks, the T. Eaton Company Ltd., or other retailers to order certain patterns or specially produced models for sale. Sometimes the date of production can be determined by finding out when the retailer was in business or located at that address.

Readers who live in the Toronto area can visit the Ceramics Study Gallery, which is located in the north wing of the Samuel European Galleries at the Royal Ontario Museum. This was set up in 1989 to show a range of the wares that includes many types commonly found in Canadian homes. Visitors may also consult reference books in the ROM Library on weekdays. If most of your mother's ceramics are English and bear marks, I think you will be successful in identifying them. Thank you for writing to ROM Answers.

PETER KAELLGREN



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

# DRAWING ON EXPERIENCE

*Capturing the magic of a museum visit*



**T**HIS PICTURE is one of my favourites. The photograph is undated, the photographer unnamed, and the student unknown—fitting, perhaps, because the image itself is timeless.

To me, it captures the intimacy of a visitor's relationships with specimens and artifacts in museums: the fierce concentration, the fascination, the rapt attention, the kind of experience that makes museum-going so magical.

Do you have a favourite artifact or specimen at the ROM? Contact me at [info@rom.on.ca](mailto:info@rom.on.ca) to share your thoughts.

*Julia Matthews is head of the ROM's Library and Archives.*

JULIA MATTHEWS

926.74.1



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